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Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 35 of Security Council resolution 2232 (2015), in which the Council requested me to report every 120 days on the implementation of the resolution, including on the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), and paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2245 (2015), in which the Council requested me to report on the implementation of that resolution, specifically any challenges faced by the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) in carrying out its mandate, as part of my regular reporting on Somalia. The report covers major developments during the period from 1 September to 31 December 2015.

II. Political and security overview

A. Political developments

2. The reporting period saw continued progress towards the building of a federal State in Somalia, including the development of the framework necessary for a political transition in 2016. Somali stakeholders launched a broadly inclusive consultative process to determine the most appropriate and feasible electoral model to be implemented in 2016. The National Consultative Forum convened in Mogadishu on 19 and 20 October, and the meeting was followed by public consultations in each of Somalia's emerging federal states as well as in the Banadir, Hiraan and Shabelle Dhexe regions, on 16 and 17 November, and for "Somalilanders" and Somalis in the diaspora on 22 November and 5 December, respectively. Women, youth, civil society representatives and minority groups were active participants in the consultations and the Forum.

3. While acknowledging that "one person, one vote" elections would not be possible in 2016, the Forum adopted the Mogadishu Declaration on 16 December, in which it reiterated that there should be no extension of constitutionally mandated term limits and outlined a number of key principles and actions to be taken in relation to the 2016 electoral model. It was also agreed that Somali leaders would reconvene and endorse a detailed electoral model and implementation plan and a political road map for the period from 2016 to 2020 by 10 January 2016.

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4. Further to the political dialogue, the parliamentary motion to impeach the President, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, mentioned in my previous report (S/2015/702), was dropped. The Speaker of the Federal Parliament, Mohamed Osman Jawari, and the Prime Minister, Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, agreed that allegations would be investigated and measures instituted to eradicate corrupt practices.

5. The President and a number of senior officials of the Federal Government of Somalia visited Beledweyne, in the Hiraan region, from 21 to 23 December to advance the state formation process in the Hiraan and Shabelle Dhexe regions. An agreement was reached in support of an earlier presidential decree that Jowhar, in Shabelle Dhexe, would serve as the site of the state formation conference, which is expected to be held in early January 2016, and that Buulobarde, in Hiraan, would be the capital of the new State. The new Governor took office in Hiraan after the removal of his predecessor, who is facing investigation and possible charges for alleged involvement in the killing of a third-party contractor for the Mine Action Service in Beledweyne on 14 November. The state formation process is expected to be completed before the ministerial meeting of the High-level Partnership Forum on 23 and 24 February 2016, although continued intra-clan divisions and inter-clan issues could cause further delays.

6. The Galmudug Interim Administration made progress towards the establishment of its governance institutions in the interim capital of Cadaado. Efforts were made to reach out to communities in accessible districts, disarm clan militias, train security forces and improve an airstrip in south Gaalkacyo. The Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a group, which controls parts of the Galguduud region, including Dhuusamarreeb, continued to challenge the legitimacy of the Galmudug Interim Administration. On 9 September, militias from the group clashed with pro-Administration Marehan clan militias, resulting in several casualties. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development, with support from UNSOM, began to facilitate dialogue between the Galmudug Interim Administration and Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a to reach an agreement.

7. Political mistrust between the Galmudug Interim Administration and Puntland erupted, with armed clashes near Gaalkacyo on 22 November, resulting in a significant number of casualties and the displacement of civilians. Triggered by a dispute over road construction near the boundary between the two administrations, fighting flared up repeatedly before collective mediation efforts by the Prime Minister and the involvement of the leaders of all other existing interim regional administrations resulted in the signing of a ceasefire agreement by the Presidents of Puntland and Galmudug on 2 December. The situation has since remained calm.

8. In Kismaayo, in Juba Hoose, Sheikh Ahmed Islam "Madobe" was inaugurated as President of Jubaland (Interim Juba Administration) on 12 September in a ceremony attended by the President and the Prime Minister of Somalia and the leaders of the existing interim regional administrations. Progress was made towards the resolution of disputes between clans and within the Marehan clan, with the commitment by the President of Jubaland to increase the number of seats in the regional assembly to accommodate underrepresented communities. On 30 December, the regional assembly approved a request by the President of Jubaland for a three-month extension of the deadline of 5 January 2016 for the nomination of his Cabinet.

9. The formation of the regional assembly of the Interim South-West Administration was completed with the swearing-in of 146 members, including 30 women, on 28 December and the election of a Speaker and two Deputy Speakers

on 3 January. Continued grievances over representation by members of the Ogaden clan led to the declaration of a breakaway "Upper Bakool" administration on 28 December. This also deepened tensions between Puntland and the Interim South-West Administration, including over the model for the 2016 electoral process.

10. In Puntland, the Speaker, Said Hassan Shire, resigned on 28 October in response to an impeachment motion against him signed by 40 members of Parliament. On 9 November, Ahmed Ali Hashi was elected as the new Speaker.

11. In "Somaliland", the President, Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud "Silanyo", issued a presidential decree on 10 September setting 28 March 2017 as the date for presidential and parliamentary elections. On 26 October, nine Cabinet ministers, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Minister of the Presidency and the Minister of Justice, and the government spokesperson, officially resigned from their posts in protest against the alleged support of the President of "Somaliland" for the candidacy of the Chair of the ruling Kulmiye Party, Musa Bihi Abdi. Further resignations followed. The Kulmiye Party held its long overdue congress on 10 November and elected presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Other parties are expected to announce their candidates in early 2016.

B. Security developments

12. In central and southern Somalia, the security situation remained volatile, with Al-Shabaab continuing to launch attacks on African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali national army positions and civilian targets. On 1 September, the anniversary of the death of former Al-Shabaab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane, more than 100 Al-Shabaab fighters stormed an AMISOM base in Janale, Shabelle Hoose. More than 20 AMISOM soldiers were killed and 23 wounded, while others remain missing. Shortly afterwards, AMISOM began to realign its forces by vacating previously recovered areas in Shabelle Hoose, including Kurtunwarey, Ceel Saliini, Cambarey, Golweyne and Busley, on 4, 5 and 9 September. In the Hiraan region, AMISOM vacated Buq-Aqabla and Xarar-Lugoole on 6 and 26 September, respectively. On 13 November, AMISOM withdrew from Fidow, on the border between the Hiraan and Shabelle Dhexe regions. All the locations were immediately seized by Al-Shabaab.

13. In Mogadishu, a suicide vehicle laden with explosives detonated as a United Nations convoy was leaving Villa Somalia on 21 September. An escort vehicle was hit and 12 people were killed, including a Somali escort guard. On 1 November, a complex attack on the Sahafi Hotel resulted in at least 15 fatalities. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for both attacks. On 14 December, a staff member of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and a non-governmental organization (NGO) worker were killed by unknown gunmen while travelling in a car. There is no evidence at this stage to suggest that the UNHCR staff member's affiliation with the United Nations was the reason for the attack.

14. Asymmetrical attacks along main supply routes also intensified. On 13 September, a convoy escorting officials from the Interim South-West Administration was hit by three roadside bombs in the Bay region. On 16 September, Al-Shabaab fighters ambushed a convoy escorting the Beledweyne District Commissioner in the Hiraan region. On 11 November, the President of the Interim South-West Administration was targeted in an attempted suicide attack along the

Afgooye corridor in the Shabelle Hoose region, for which Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility.

15. In the Hiraan region, a United Nations third-party contractor was shot dead in Beledweyne on 14 November, allegedly by security guards of the Governor of the region, which sparked a stand-off between clan militias, increased tensions in the town and led to a restriction of United Nations movements. Normality has since been restored following the arrest of suspects and the institution of investigations against the Governor.

16. Divisions within Al-Shabaab emerged during the reporting period. In Puntland, on 22 October, a senior Al-Shabaab leader, Sheikh Abdiqadir Mumin, pledged allegiance to Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) with a group of approximately 20 fighters in the Galgala Mountains. Following that development, the Al-Shabaab leadership commenced a crackdown on pro-ISIL members by arresting and assassinating them. In Juba Dhexe, Al-Shabaab operatives arrested two ISIL supporters in Saakow on 27 October and a pro-ISIL faction leader, Sheikh Hussein Abdi Gedi, was killed in an ambush by Al-Shabaab militants on 23 November.

17. In the disputed Sool region between Puntland and "Somaliland", separatist "Khatumo State" militias attacked "Somaliland" forces in Xudun on 18 September. Tensions remain high.

III. Support for peacebuilding and state-building efforts

A. International coordination and political support

18. My Special Representative continued to work closely with federal and regional leaders in Mogadishu, Garoowe, Baidoa and Kismaayo to advance state formation, federalization, the review of the Provisional Constitution and consultations on the 2016 electoral process. He emphasized the importance of the latter being a Somali-led and owned inclusive and transparent process that would ensure a more representative and accountable Parliament, with greater representation for women, youth and persons with disabilities. In addition, my Special Representative regularly interacted with the diplomatic corps in Nairobi and with international partners based in Mogadishu, who convened at regular intervals to coordinate policy and donor support.

19. The New Deal Compact mechanisms continued to serve as the framework for the coordination of international support to Somalia's peacebuilding and state-building processes. By the end of the reporting period, the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund had disbursed $34.8 million to joint programmes developed and approved through the Compact's architecture, covering all of its Peacebuilding and State-building Goals. A review was initiated to assess progress made against the priorities, milestones and cross-cutting issues of the Goals and on commitments made by the Federal Government and international partners.

20. Preparations began for the third ministerial meeting of the High-level Partnership Forum, to be held on 23 and 24 February 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey. The Forum will review progress made in 2015 on the implementation of the New Deal Compact and will consider how the partnership can be continued beyond the end of the Compact in 2016. Discussions will also focus on the outcomes of the consultative

process for the 2016 electoral process, progress in the security sector and the acceleration of the economic recovery.

21. On 8 December, in Mogadishu, the President and my Special Representative co-chaired an ambassadorial-level meeting of the High-level Partnership Forum. The meeting was the first to be attended by all regional Presidents, in addition to the Speaker of the Federal Parliament, a broad range of Somali stakeholders and 29 international delegations, and reviewed developments under the Compact and milestones to be achieved by the time of the holding of the ministerial meeting. UNSOM and the United Nations country team are closely involved in the preparations.

B. Inclusive politics

Development of a federal system

22. Despite significant progress in the establishment of state structures at the regional level, considerable challenges remain. State formation processes have not yet led to broadly supported and sufficiently detailed arrangements for federal state structures. Interim regional administrations are still struggling to establish authority, being faced with an absence of revenue, a lack of government infrastructure and insufficient staff levels. Significant support will continue to be required from international partners to bridge those gaps.

23. On 24 and 25 November, Ministers of Information from the Federal Government and existing interim regional administrations ratified a cooperation protocol on the media and information at their first media-related inclusive conference. The protocol included an agreement to increase the exchange of information, devise a unified communications strategy to combat terrorism and counteract violent extremism, establish cooperation with private and public media and engage in awareness-raising and reconciliation, constitutional, federalist and electoral activities. On 28 December, the Parliament of Somalia passed the country's Media Law. The Ministry of Information and the National Union of Somali Journalists have requested UNSOM support in implementing the Law through stakeholder training and capacity-building.

24. Parliament endorsed the Anti-Money-Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Law on 26 December.

Constitutional review process

25. The constitutional review process has been slow in advancing, and continuous cooperation and coordination among the Oversight Committee, the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission and the Federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs remains crucial. On 15 September, the Speaker of the Federal Parliament presented a proposal for the review of the Provisional Constitution, which included the preparation of draft amendments by the end of 2015, consultations, outreach and civic education, and approval by Parliament by March 2016.

26. At the request of the Prime Minister, three international constitutional experts visited Mogadishu from 26 to 30 October for a high-level workshop facilitated by the United Nations Development Programme and UNSOM. The Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Federal Parliament, delegates from the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission, the Oversight Committee and the Federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and several members of Parliament participated in

the workshop, which provided a platform for open dialogue on the constitutional review. On 9 November, following the discussions at the workshop, the Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission presented revised chapters 1 and 4 of the Provisional Constitution and received instructions from the Oversight Committee for the review of chapters 2, 3 and 5. A subsequent expert workshop to review chapters 1 to 8 from a technical point of view began in Nairobi on 28 December.

Preparations for elections

27. In addition to consultations on selecting an appropriate electoral model for 2016, the National Independent Electoral Commission started preparations for the eventual conduct of "one person, one vote" elections in 2020. The Commission held its first strategic planning retreat from 29 September to 2 October, following which it adopted its vision, guiding principles and mission statement and its action plan for the period from October 2015 to December 2016. Communications strategy development training took place on 8 October, which aimed at enhancing the Commissioners' skills in disseminating information on the work of the Commission. Commissioners undertook study visits to the United Republic of Tanzania from 21 to 28 October and to Turkey from 31 October to 6 November.

28. Somali stakeholders conducted a consultative workshop on the political party bill, organized by the Ministry of the Interior and Federal Affairs, from 21 to 23 November, ahead of parliamentary consideration of the bill.

C. Rule of law and security institutions

Security sector assistance and reform

29. The Federal Government is currently developing a national security policy and a national defence act and has acknowledged the importance of enhancing mechanisms for civilian oversight of the security sector. International partners continued to urge the building of a national security sector architecture within a federal system that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of security institutions at the federal and regional levels. On 9 September, in an official statement, the President committed to substantive security sector reform, including timely and adequate pay by electronic means, an audit of the sector, the establishment of an interim procurement board, the transfer to a unified biometric registration system and the implementation of a national threat assessment. Meaningful financial and equipment support for the Guulwade (Victory) Plan, which aims at enhancing the ability of the Somali national army to undertake joint operations with AMISOM and assume greater responsibility for security, has yet to materialize.

30. At a Peacebuilding and State-building Goal 2 (Security) working group meeting on 9 September, the Federal Ministry of Finance committed itself to establishing an accountable and transparent security sector payroll system that allowed for the reliable, sustainable and harmonized delivery of salaries and stipends for 22,000 Somali national army and 12,500 Somali police force personnel. Several donors are working closely with the Federal Government on wider reform commitments made by the President as a complement to their contribution to security sector personnel payments. By the end of the reporting period, a total of 19,800 Somali national army and 6,748 Somali police force personnel were biometrically registered in the human resources system.

31. UNSOM continued to support the work of the National Integration Commission. As at 31 December, the Commission had integrated 1,518 militias from the Interim Juba Administration into the Somali national army, before anticipated losses and desertions, in line with the target of 1,350.

32. In September and October, UNSOM and the Mine Action Service conducted weapon-marking and registration training for 20 representatives from the security and justice sectors. On 15 October, the Mine Action Service handed over three weapon-marking machines to the Federal Government.

Police

33. The development of the Heegan (Readiness) Plan was completed by the end of October, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 2232 (2015). The Plan seeks to establish basic policing services across Somalia. It envisages a police service of 12,874 personnel, based on a federal policing model. At a Peacebuilding and State-building Goal 2 working group meeting on 28 October, the Plan was welcomed by international partners as a living document that needed further work, and agreement was reached at the working group meeting on 9 December to further refine technical aspects to allow for its implementation. From 27 to 29 September, the Somali police force, supported by UNSOM and AMISOM, held its first workshop in Mogadishu on a new policing model for Somalia, attended by representatives from all existing interim regional administrations.

34. The Juba police training camp opened in Kismaayo on 23 October. In addition, 200 recruits graduated from a programme funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and implemented with the support of AMISOM police in Baidoa. On 11 November, stipend payments to the Somali police force recommenced, with a total of $4.3 million paid to 5,200 officers to cover eight months of arrears. On 9 September, 56 police patrol vehicles donated by Japan were handed over to the Somali police force in Mogadishu, 21 of which were distributed to subfederal entities.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

35. UNSOM supported the Federal Government in launching a strategic communications plan for the national programme for disengaged combatants, coordinating two workshops in Mogadishu on 1 and 26 November. The plan, which highlights the benefits of the national programme, is intended to trigger further defections from Al-Shabaab. As at 13 December, 345 males were being hosted in the centres of the national programme: 225 in Mogadishu (Serendi Facility), 25 in Beledweyne (Hiil Walaal Facility) and 95 in Baidoa. Beneficiaries receive vocational training, traditional dispute resolution training and trauma therapy. Individuals are reintegrated into society upon the determination of an exit board. The International Organization for Migration, with funding support from UNSOM, opened the first safe house for disengaged female Al-Shabaab combatants on 1 November in Baidoa, which is currently hosting the first 16 female and 20 dependent child beneficiaries.

Maritime security

36. The Federal Government, with support from UNSOM, continued to draft the Naqude (Captain) Plan to train and equip the Somali Navy and Coast Guard. Capacity-building for the maritime police force, drafted with support from UNSOM, was incorporated into the Heegan Plan. The Government raised funding, with

UNSOM assistance, for the re-establishment of a Somali maritime administration department and began to develop a new Somali maritime code.

Mine action

37. On 1 October, the Council of Ministers approved the national mine action legislation, policy and budget of the Somalia Explosive Management Authority, and the Federal Government ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions. On 4 December, the Federal Government launched the Badbaado (Protection) Plan, which outlines the international support required to coordinate and implement explosive hazard management operations in Somalia.

38. Earlier in the reporting period, Somali teams worked on a UNMAS project to assess and mark explosive hazards for destruction in 76 communities along the Somali-Ethiopian border.

Justice and corrections

39. UNSOM continued to support the development of the Onkod (Thunder) Plan to build an effective federal Custodial Corps through legislative reform, organizational restructuring and infrastructure development. As at 31 December, 1,317 prison staff were biometrically registered in the human resources system for the security forces. UNSOM completed five training courses for 126 staff in Mogadishu and Baidoa, focusing on basic prison officer duties, human rights and emergency medical training, and conducted the first all-female workshop for 32 female Custodial Corps officers from six prisons, addressing gender equality issues. UNSOM supported the Federal Ministry of Justice in planning a consultative workshop, tentatively scheduled for January 2016, to determine the framework of a new justice and corrections model for Somalia in the context of federalism.

40. On 22 October, UNSOM organized a workshop with national counterparts to identify priorities and key deliverables for the implementation of the Somalia Joint Rule of Law Programme. The Peacebuilding and State-building Goal 3 (Justice) working group, in its meetings on 28 October and 10 December, approved the deliverables and agreed on a schedule to guide the implementation of the Programme.

D. Economic foundations

41. On 5 October, the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility Steering Committee granted approval for a joint programme on sustainable charcoal reduction and alternative livelihoods. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2036 (2012), the programme will seek to curb regional trade in charcoal while promoting alternative sources of domestic energy and livelihoods.

42. In early November, the World Bank launched the Somalia Economic Update, the first in a series of reports designed to stimulate debate on economic policy and public financial management reform. The report noted that Somalia's economy had remained resilient despite two decades of conflict and was driven mainly by the private sector. The gross domestic product of Somalia was estimated at $5.4 billion (2013), or $435 per capita, placing Somalia among the five poorest countries in the world. The report found that remittances provided a lifeline to the Somali economy and that massive infrastructural gaps created high costs for businesses.

43. Approval was granted for the World Bank project to support remittance flows to Somalia, in compliance with international anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorism financing regulations, and to the special financing facility for local development to rehabilitate critical local infrastructure. A transport needs assessment was completed to inform priority projects for potential funding through the African Development Bank-led Somalia Infrastructure Trust Fund.

44. From 11 to 14 December, my former representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin, conducted a scoping mission in Mogadishu as part of his assignment to develop a comprehensive strategy for durable solutions for the 1.1 million internally displaced persons in Somalia. The visit was met with enthusiasm by the Federal Government and international partners. As an initial finding, Mr. Kälin concluded that the protracted nature of displacement in Somalia required a stronger emphasis on development efforts and the mainstreaming of issues relating to internally displaced persons into development planning.

E. Revenue and services

45. On 2 October, the second World Bank Recurrent Cost and Reform Financing Project was launched to support the Federal Government in developing a more robust payroll system for civil servants and in expanding service delivery in health care and education. Subsequently, the Federal Minister of Finance convened a meeting in the first week of November with counterparts from the existing interim regional administrations and Puntland, signalling both the mandate and the ability of the Federal Government to play a role in coordinating Somali regions, particularly on the issue of fiscal management.

46. The United Nations and the World Bank continued to collaborate on their respective national funding mechanisms, designed to channel funds directly to government entities, in support of the increased use of national systems and stronger macroeconomic and fiscal management. The Peacebuilding Fund confirmed an initial allocation of $2 million through the United Nations mechanism. Functional reviews were undertaken to help the Government to strengthen internal ministerial structures.

F. Cross-cutting issues

Stabilization and community recovery

47. Efforts continued to coordinate Government, AMISOM and international efforts for the stabilization of districts recovered from Al-Shabaab. Joint planning and synchronization between military and civilian actions remain a challenge. It remains imperative that military operations provide the conditions necessary for stabilization in recovered areas, as recognized by the United Nations-African Union benchmarking review.

48. In October and November, access to some districts was affected by the floods caused by heavy rains brought on by the El Niño phenomenon. All districts have some level of deployment of caretaker administrations, with the exception of Baardheere, where a caretaker administration has been identified but not yet deployed. The training of 130 police officers to be deployed to the districts has been completed,

although deployment to newly recovered areas continues to be a challenge, despite agreements and the initial allocation of resources from the Peacebuilding Fund.

49. Some level of economic activity was reported in most districts, owing mainly to the mobilization of the community and sometimes with injections of capital from the diaspora. In addition to the rehabilitation of administrative offices, schools, police stations, courts and health-care facilities, community projects were ongoing in nine districts with the support of the Somalia Stability Fund, the United States Agency for International Development and AMISOM quick-impact projects.

Human rights

50. During the reporting period, a total of 123 civilian casualties were documented, compared with 113 over the previous reporting period. Of those, Al-Shabaab or unidentified armed individuals were implicated in the killing of 95 people, with Somali security forces implicated in the killing of 27 people and AMISOM forces implicated in 22 killings.

51. The military courts handed down four death sentences. The Interim Juba Administration executed 14 people without due process. More than 60 suspected wives of Al-Shabaab members were forcibly displaced. More than 300 people, 250 of whom were in Puntland, were arrested during security sweeps targeting Al-Shabaab elements. Most were released after screening. In Puntland, house-to-house searches targeted youth, mostly from outside Puntland.

52. Freedom of expression continues to be challenged. In separate incidents, the National Intelligence and Security Agency and Puntland and "Somaliland" authorities arrested various media workers for hosting shows or publishing news stories on the country's political situation. Puntland authorities also banned more than 35 media websites. Four musicians were arrested in "Somaliland" for allegedly promoting Somali "union" in Mogadishu.

53. The non-payment of salaries to security personnel continued to be a challenge and was linked to violations of human rights by security forces and the erection of illegal checkpoints to extort money from civilians in parts of southern and central Somalia.

54. UNSOM provided training on international human rights and humanitarian law for security forces and civil society organizations, including 79 members of the Somali national army, 25 Somali police force personnel and 54 civil society representatives. The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights emphasized matters relating to human rights due diligence policy in his discussions with AMISOM and federal and regional interlocutors during his visit to Somalia from 14 to 17 November.

55. Following work with UNSOM on the implementation of the recommendations of the universal periodic review in 2012 and on the creation of a human rights road map, the Federal Government submitted its national report for the second cycle of the universal periodic review for January 2016, and the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights held regional consultations on the National Human Rights Commission bill. The mandate of the independent expert appointed by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Somalia was renewed by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 30/20.

56. UNSOM, in consultation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, provided detailed comments on the Counter-Terrorism bill of June 2015 to guide the legislature in ensuring that the bill conforms with international legal standards. The bill is expected to be considered imminently by Parliament.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

57. On 15 September, with UNSOM support and the presence of more than 50 federal, regional and civil society representatives and international partners, the Federal Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development launched the national gender policy formulation process in Mogadishu. It is expected that, upon completion, the policy will provide an overall framework for the advancement of women's rights, gender equality and the women, peace and security agenda in Somalia.

58. Women actively participated in consultations on the 2016 electoral process. Women's groups also held their own consultations to determine a common position and enhance their advocacy at the National Consultative Forum.

59. On 28 October, my Special Representative hosted an open day with more than 60 women leaders, peacebuilders, activists, Federal Ministers, Federal members of Parliament, women in security sector institutions, youth and students. At the event, women leaders shared their concerns and recommendations on how to advance the women, peace and security agenda and increase the representation of women in the 2016 electoral process.

60. From 2 to 6 December, with United Nations support, 28 women leaders, including Federal members of Parliament, civil society representatives and peace activists, undertook a peace mission from Mogadishu to Gaalkacyo to advocate for and negotiate peace.

Child protection

61. On 1 October, Somalia became the 196th State to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

62. On 21 October, UNSOM and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) organized a one-day workshop to develop a capacity-building and training plan for the Child Protection Unit of the Somali national army to support the Federal Government in the implementation of signed action plans, the dissemination of policies throughout army units and the setting up of systems to ensure compliance.

63. As at 14 November, the Federal Government, with support from UNSOM and UNICEF, had facilitated the release of 79 boys from facilities in Mogadishu and Beledweyne, where they had been held as part of the rehabilitation programme for defectors from Al-Shabaab. The children were handed over to UNICEF-supported NGOs and enrolled in community-based reintegration services. This brought the total number of supported children affected by the conflict since December 2014 to 749 (620 boys and 129 girls) and concluded a long period of intensive United Nations advocacy for children affected by armed conflict. It is an important achievement by the Government in its commitment to implement Somalia's action plans on children and armed conflict.

64. At least 157 incidents of grave violations against children were documented in the reporting period, in particular killing and maiming and recruitment and use,

affecting 146 children (128 boys and 18 girls) and mainly perpetrated by the Somali national army and Al-Shabaab.

Prevention of sexual violence

65. In accordance with the requirements set out in Security Council resolution 1960 (2010), the United Nations formed a working group on the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements with regard to conflict-related sexual violence on 5 November to ensure the systematic gathering of timely, accurate and reliable information on such violence against women, men and children in Somalia. The information will be used to promote increased and timely action to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence.

66. The Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, mandated by the Security Council in its resolution 1888 (2009), continued to support efforts to address sexual violence in Somalia, including the submission of proposed revisions to the rape and sexual violence bill currently before the "Somaliland" parliament.

IV. Humanitarian situation

67. The humanitarian situation in Somalia remains worrying. The El Niño phenomenon caused flooding from the start of the rainy season in October, cumulatively affecting 145,000 people and displacing an estimated 60,000 people across southern and central Somalia. Early warning, preparedness and response activities continued, with the collaboration of federal and regional authorities. The risk of flooding remains. Overall, 4.9 million people need assistance: 308,000 children under 5 years of age are acutely malnourished and 56,000 are severely malnourished. More than 1.1 million people remain internally displaced. In "Somaliland", the El Niño phenomenon has exacerbated drought conditions, severely affecting livelihoods, and nearly 129,000 people are estimated to be food insecure. The authorities issued a drought appeal on 10 August.

68. From January to October 2015, nearly 220,000 acutely malnourished children under 5 received life-saving nutrition services. More than 1.5 million people received basic health-care services; protection services reached 303,000 people, including 42,802 children; household and shelter assistance reached 145,000 people; and 44,000 learners accessed education activities. Around 100,000 people received cash transfers. In October, around 406,000 people received food assistance, 393,000 received livelihood support and 621,000 received livelihood seasonal inputs. On 15 November, the authorities launched a nationwide measles immunization campaign targeting 4.4 million children. Somalia has successfully controlled polio, with no new cases reported in the past 15 months.

69. Since 8 December 2014, UNHCR has assisted 5,823 Somali returnees from Kenya. Since the onset of the conflict in Yemen, UNHCR has registered 29,640 persons arriving from Yemen, including 26,282 Somali returnees, 3,138 Yemeni refugees and 220 others.

70. Humanitarian funding since January 2015 totalled $543 million, including $328 million (38 per cent) of the $863 million requested for the Humanitarian Response

Plan for Somalia for 2015. There were shortfalls across all sectors. Of the $30 million requested for El Niño preparedness and response, $14 million was received.

71. The operating environment remains dangerous, with an increase in attacks against humanitarian workers. In 2015, 120 violent incidents affecting humanitarian organizations were recorded, compared with 75 in 2014. Twelve humanitarian workers were killed, 17 injured, 36 arrested and 8 abducted. Administrative impediments continued to disrupt aid delivery. On 18 November, the Deputy Prime Minister convened 20 local and international NGOs for a round-table discussion with the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator on the national policy on NGOs, the accelerated and unimpeded delivery of services and strengthening the role of local NGOs as implementing partners.

72. Road access to 28 districts in southern and central regions and Buhoodle district in the north was severely constrained by illegal checkpoints, road blockages and insecurity, which affected commercial activity, the movement of people and humanitarian assistance. The main roads most affected remained the Beledweyne-Buulobarde-Mogadishu, the Mogadishu-Baidoa-Doolow and the Mogadishu-Marka-Baraawe-Kismaayo roads. Since July, new military offensives have exacerbated the restrictions. The presence of Al-Shabaab on roads between Diinsoor and Ufurow, in the Bay region, and Baardheere, in the Gedo region, is a concern. Flooding and poor road conditions have rendered some roads in the Hiraan, Shabelle Dhexe, Juba Dhexe, Juba Hoose and Shabelle Hoose regions impassable.

V. Targeted sanctions

73. On 18 September, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator briefed the Security Council Committee on Somalia and Eritrea on the report submitted pursuant to paragraph 42 of Council resolution 2182 (2014) (see S/2015/731, annex). The Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group presented its final report on Somalia to the Committee on 22 September (see S/2015/801). The Federal Government submitted its second report pursuant to paragraph 9 of Council resolution 2182 (2014) to the Council on 29 September. On 20 November, I appointed eight experts to serve on the Monitoring Group until 15 December 2016 (see S/2015/898).

VI. Support to the African Union Mission in Somalia, the Somali national army and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia

74. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2245 (2015), the United Nations Support Office to the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) was renamed the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS). The Support Office is developing compacts with AMISOM and UNSOM to support those entities, which are expected to be finalized in early 2016.

75. The Director of UNSOS visited Addis Ababa in November and December for consultations with the African Union, the newly appointed Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, AMISOM troop-contributing countries and Member States on the implementation of Security Council

resolution 2245 (2015). Preliminary meetings between the aforementioned Special Representative and my Special Representative took place in mid-December.

76. The Director of UNSOS concluded negotiations with African Union and AMISOM representatives on the final draft umbrella memorandum of understanding between the African Union and the United Nations on the provision of logistical support to AMISOM. The memorandum of understanding is expected to be signed in the coming weeks. UNSOS has also commenced negotiations with the African Union, AMISOM and troop-contributing countries on the tripartite memorandum of understanding on contingent-owned equipment. It is negotiating maintenance and repair contracts to ensure that at least 75 per cent of vehicles donated under the memorandum of understanding are kept operational, as required by the Security Council in its resolution 2245 (2015).

77. As part of its civilian staffing review, UNSOS identified 31 posts critical in meeting immediate surge requirements, estimated to cost around $2 million and to be funded under general temporary assistance from existing resources. Subject to approval, staff will be assigned to the general temporary assistance positions during the first quarter of 2016. UNSOS is also implementing internal restructuring, in line with the global field support strategy.

78. UNSOS, in coordination with United Nations Headquarters, is working with the Government of the United Kingdom on the deployment of 70 uniformed personnel pledged by that country. Possible areas of engagement are the establishment of mission enabling units, engineering construction projects, military medical capability, enhancement of the potable water supply capacity of AMISOM, military information and analysis and the repair of combat vehicles and heavy equipment.

79. UNSOS continued to provide logistical support to AMISOM in all sectors. However, insecure main supply routes remained a challenge to the movement of UNSOS convoys by road. With regard to air support, UNSOS deployed 10 rotary and 4 fixed-wing air assets at the main and sector hubs, enabling significantly improved air movement within southern and central Somalia. In addition, the implementation of an all-inclusive standby contract has enhanced operational flexibility for UNSOS, resulting in reduced mission costs and better utilization of available resources. The United Nations continues to negotiate with the Government of Uganda on a letter of assist for the deployment of five military helicopters to AMISOM.

80. UNSOS has been conducting night-time helicopter search and rescue operations and medical and casualty evacuations, which have enhanced its capability to provide vital emergency support. It has also been conducting a robust aviation security and operational risk management programme in its area of operations, with the support of AMISOM, the United Nations country team, the Federal Government and the International Civil Aviation Organization.

81. UNSOS supported the rotation of Burundian and Ugandan troops and some of the Djibouti troops during the reporting period, as well as the deployment of 600 additional Ethiopian troops and contingent-owned equipment to Kismaayo. The remainder of the Djibouti troops will be rotated in January 2016.

82. UNSOS trained 507 AMISOM personnel in the areas of conduct and discipline, gender, HIV/AIDS, child protection, medical services, water treatment, radio communications, diesel kitchen operations, logistics and fuel operations.

83. UNSOS encountered difficulties in the delivery of support arising from the non-implementation by the host country of some of the provisions of the status-of-mission agreement. Violations included the failure to grant gratis visas and work permits, occasional demands to United Nations contractors for payment and the detention of contractor personnel pending such payment.

84. The Mine Action Service continued to train, equip and mentor 13 AMISOM teams in improvised explosive device mitigation measures and explosive ordnance disposal. To address the threat from improvised explosive devices and support AMISOM mobility, the Service continued to provide data, analysis and advice through staff at AMISOM Force Headquarters, sector headquarters and the AMISOM integrated support office. AMISOM also utilized the Service's community-based explosive hazard survey and clearance teams along main supply routes to obtain a clearer vision of the security landscape. AMISOM used information provided by the Service on community priorities and the condition of towns and villages in newly recovered areas.

85. Planning for the establishment and operationalization of mission enabling units has begun, and an African Union and United Nations steering group will commence work in the coming weeks to establish governance structures, including standard operating procedures and command and control.

86. UNSOS has pre-positioned supplies to support more than 1,500 Somali national army troops in Sector 2 (Juba Hoose and part of Juba Dhexe).

87. Since my previous report, the Trust Fund in support of the Somali national army received a total contribution of $16.3 million from the United States of America and Denmark. UNSOS spends around $1 million each month to support the Somali national army, mainly on rations, delivery costs and aeromedical/casualty evacuations. The current balance of the Trust Fund in support of AMISOM is $1.7 million.

88. Pursuant to paragraph 15 of Security Council resolution 2245 (2015), UNSOM and UNSOS are in discussion with United Nations entities that may have capacity to deliver the non-lethal support package to the Somali police force and the Puntland forces earmarked for integration into the Somali national army.

89. UNSOS continued to support UNSOM activities, including the National Consultative Forum and High-level Partnership Forum meetings. UNSOS also provided support for the expansion of UNSOM in Mogadishu and the regions by completing accommodation and office facilities that met minimum operating security standards in Beledweyne and Baidoa.

Human rights due diligence policy

90. My Special Representative provided a formal update to AMISOM on the outcome of the UNSOM investigations into the alleged human rights violations by AMISOM during the previous reporting period and requested AMISOM to provide a written update on investigations or further actions it has taken in that regard.

91. Joint efforts by UNSOM, UNSOS and AMISOM are being put in place to strengthen accountability and investigative measures to address violations by AMISOM within the human rights due diligence policy framework. The human rights due diligence task force conducted a general and preliminary risk assessment and a human rights due diligence assessment of air assets. My Special Representative

communicated key elements of the risk assessment to AMISOM, including recommendations to AMISOM on mitigating measures to establish an effective complaint handling mechanism, ensure victim and witness protection and regularly communicate with the United Nations on how allegations are addressed, and the need for commanders to ensure that all troops were trained in human rights and international humanitarian law.

VII. United Nations presence in Somalia

A. Expansion of the United Nations presence

92. During the reporting period, the number of international staff averaged 432 across Somalia, while the number of national staff averaged 1,037. The international staff average for Mogadishu was 294, factoring in a reduction in the number owing to significant damage to the United Nations common compound as a result of the attack on 26 July on the nearby Jazeera Palace Hotel. Displaced staff of the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies were accommodated at the main UNSOS/UNSOM compound at Mogadishu International Airport, with some third-party contractor staff moved to commercial compounds.

93. Regional expansion of UNSOM is ongoing, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2232 (2015). A total of 18 international and 16 national staff are currently deployed in regional offices in Baidoa (4 international, 4 national), Kismaayo (3 international, 3 national), Beledweyne (3 international) and Garoowe (8 international, 9 national), supporting regional authorities in the areas of good offices, security sector reform, human rights, civil-military coordination and stabilization.

B. Integration

94. UNSOM and the United Nations country team continued to cooperate to implement the approved joint programmes under the New Deal Compact throughout Somalia. In addition, UNSOM and country team integrated teams continued to provide support on elections, constitutional review, the Somalia Joint Rule of Law Programme, human rights and protection and the Gender Adviser's integrated office. Currently, all project managers of the Joint Rule of Law Programme are co-located in the UNSOM/UNSOS compound in Mogadishu. Members of the country team are also accommodated intermittently in UNSOM/UNSOS premises in all regional offices.

C. Staff safety and security

95. Additional security measures have been implemented along Airport Road in Mogadishu, including the designation of gates for traffic and restrictions on certain types of vehicles.

96. In Beledweyne, the final field safety and security survey was completed and a staff ceiling of 13 international staff was consequently approved.

97. Garoowe airport was closed for runway repairs on 9 December. An airstrip at Conoco, 39 km away, was identified as an alternative by the Puntland Government and assessed for suitability by the UNSOS aviation unit, the United Nations

Humanitarian Air Service and the Department of Safety and Security. At the time of reporting, the Conoco airstrip was being used by the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, with preparations under way for the construction of critical enabling infrastructure for the resumption of UNSOS air operations.

VIII. Observations

98. I commend the historic consultations that have taken place in Mogadishu and across Somalia, including for the Somali diaspora, within the framework of the National Consultative Forum, to determine the 2016 electoral process. This major exercise in participatory politics is a manifestation of the commitment of the Somali people to democracy and a demonstration of how Somalia is returning to peace and security. For the first time in decades, Somalis — including youth, women, traditional elders and religious leaders — have actively had a collective say on shaping their political future.

99. I also warmly welcome the adoption of the Mogadishu Declaration on 16 December. Somalis have reiterated their commitment that there will be no extension of the constitutionally mandated term limits of the legislature and the executive. Through the Declaration, they have agreed that more Somalis than at any time since the civil war, including a significant number of women and youth, will take part in choosing the people's representatives and the Government. They have pledged to ensure that Somalia's electoral colleges and the new Parliament will be more inclusive and representative, and that Somalis will have a road map for elections through universal suffrage to be held by 2020.

100. Many steps remain to be taken before the electoral transition in 2016. Above all, it is critical that all Somali leaders respect and support the principles and actions in the Mogadishu Declaration and work swiftly to implement them.

101. I call upon the relevant stakeholders to expedite the process of state formation in Hiraan and Shabelle Dhexe. I welcome the leadership role of the Federal Government in this regard, and call upon it to ensure a transparent and inclusive process with the participation of all relevant communities that addresses long-standing grievances and tensions that need to be resolved. I also urge progress on the clarification of the status of Mogadishu.

102. I applaud the collective effort of the federal and regional leaders to end the fighting, which started in Gaalkacyo on 22 November and resulted in the needless killing, wounding and displacement of a large number of civilians. The incident underlined the urgent need to make progress on intercommunal reconciliation and to address outstanding disputes within and among existing and emerging federal states.

103. I am disappointed that the review of the Provisional Constitution did not advance sufficiently during the reporting period. The proposal presented by the Speaker of the Federal Parliament on 15 September for the constitutional review provides useful guidance on what could be accomplished in the time available. I urge the relevant institutions to expedite their efforts. It is also critical for the review process to hear from a cross section of Somali society so that the future Constitution is broadly owned across the country. In particular, targeted efforts are needed in order to include voices from youth, women and marginalized groups.

104. Continued attacks by Al-Shabaab remind us of the ever-present threat posed by violent extremists. But such attacks cannot disguise the fact that the group is steadily losing support. Al-Shabaab is also facing serious internal division, with some members wishing to align the group with ISIL. The evolution of Al-Shabaab into an arm of ISIL would present serious challenges to peacebuilding and state-building in Somalia. I reiterate the need to maintain the pressure on Al-Shabaab under a comprehensive approach. The threat of violent extremism must be countered by creating space for inclusive politics, stabilizing recovered areas and pursuing economic recovery, reducing youth unemployment and enhancing education, countering extremist rhetoric and ideological appeal and encouraging further defections from Al-Shabaab by providing a future for disengaged combatants.

105. I pay tribute to AMISOM and the Somali national army for the progress they continue to make in difficult conditions, and I urge them to sustain their operations. I call upon the Federal Government and the interim regional administrations to expedite the establishment of district and local administrations in newly recovered areas and to ensure the delivery of basic services to the population to consolidate hard-won gains.

106. I take note of the European Union's decision to reduce its contribution to AMISOM, and I urge Member States and international partners to ensure the sustenance of their investment in Somalia and explore opportunities to cover the funding gap.

107. I welcome the establishment of UNSOS as the successor to UNSOA. UNSOA played an important role as a responsive and efficient strategic enabler in Somalia. The United Nations sees its partnership with the African Union as a successful collaboration. I look forward to strengthening this joint effort. UNSOS has a key role to play in the next phase of the relationship.

108. I am seriously concerned about the spike in reported executions in the Interim Juba Administration, civilian casualties linked to AMISOM and Somali security forces and the killing of a United Nations third-party contractor in Hiraan and a UNHCR national staff member in Mogadishu. I strongly urge the full investigation of those incidents and the prosecution of the perpetrators. I commend the Federal Government's engagement with the United Nations on human rights issues, including the submission of its national report to the Human Rights Council in October for the second cycle of the universal periodic review, and the consultative process on the National Human Rights Commission bill in November.

109. I remain extremely concerned about the fragile humanitarian situation in Somalia. More than 4.9 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian impact of the El Niño phenomenon is also of serious concern. I urge all parties to facilitate timely, unhindered and safe access for humanitarian actors and to find durable solutions for the 1.1 million Somalis who are internally displaced. I reiterate my appeal to donors to increase support to the humanitarian appeal for Somalia.

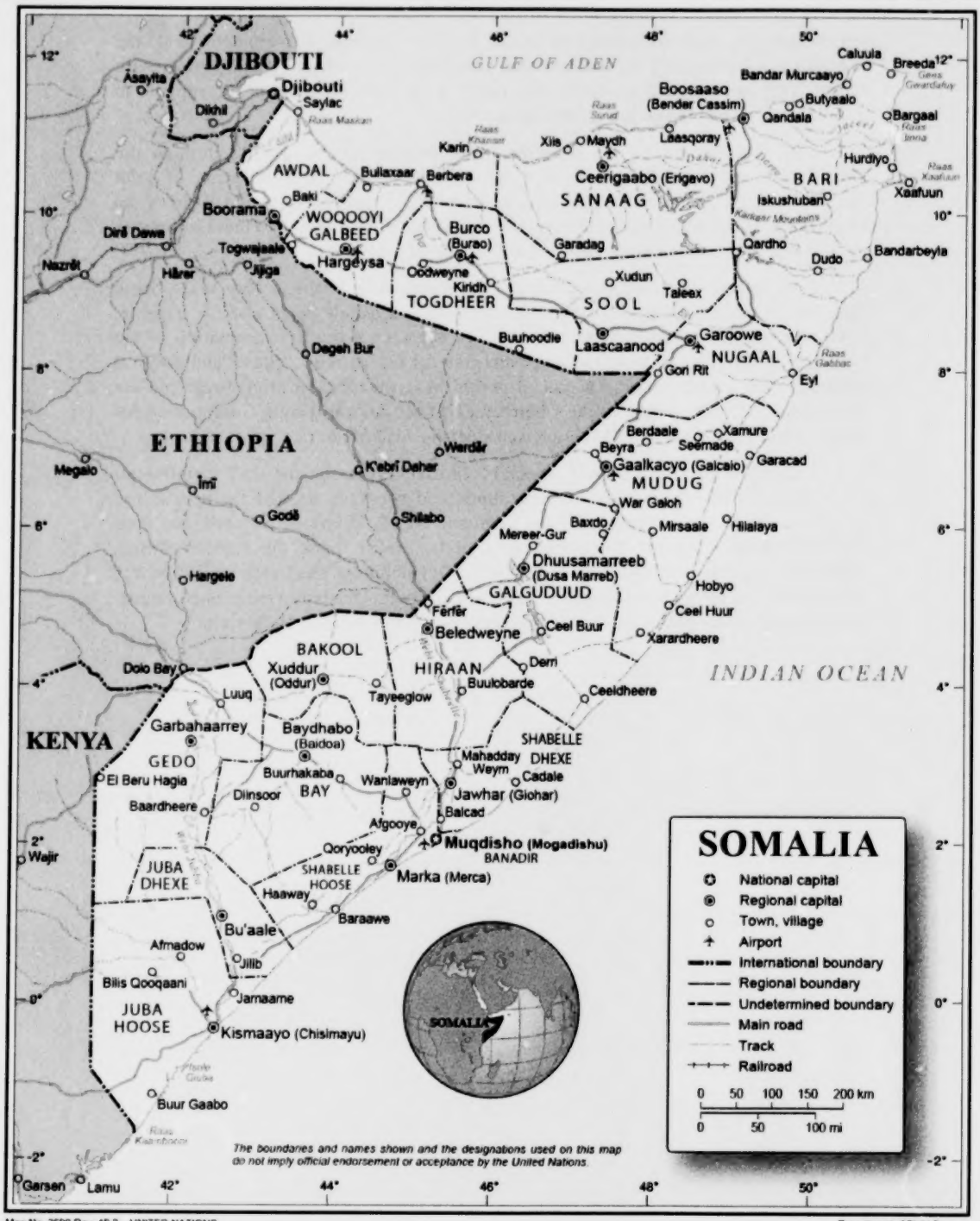
110. I stress the importance of the Federal Government finalizing its national security policy and deciding on a national security architecture without further delay, and making concrete progress on the integration of regional forces into the Somali national army. I urge all partners to commit themselves to mobilizing the resources necessary to support the Somali national army and the Somali police force, and to support the National Integration Commission in its work. I remain concerned by the serious implications of the non-payment of salaries to security personnel, but I am

encouraged by the commitments made by the Federal Government and the international community to address the situation. UNSOM, in collaboration with Somali and international partners, will continue to develop options for support to 3,000 Puntland forces and the Somali police force.

111. I am encouraged by the progress made in channelling funding through the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the initial implementation of joint programmes, including on the rule of law, under the New Deal structure. I stress the importance of the international community increasing contributions to these initiatives as essential to providing basic services to the Somali people.

112. I pay tribute to my outgoing Special Representative, Nicholas Kay, and I thank him for his dedicated service over the past two and a half years and his capable, courageous and committed leadership. He has overseen a true transformation of the United Nations effort in Somalia, and I am grateful for his wise counsel and political support to the country during a crucial period in its history. I warmly welcome the new Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of AMISOM, Francisco Caetano José Madeira.

113. I also commend my Deputy Special Representatives and the staff members of UNSOM, UNSOS, the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, and other international and regional organizations in Somalia for their continued hard work in challenging conditions. I also thank the African Union, AMISOM, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the European Union and other development partners for their sustained support. Our partnership must endure and continue to deepen in the quest for lasting peace and stability in Somalia.



Map No. 3690 Rev. 10.2 UNITED NATIONS
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Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

United Nations S/2016/28

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 8 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In the capacity of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the Chair of the thirty-sixth session of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, I write to bring to your attention the following:

In reference to the Security Council's press elements on Yemen delivered on 5 January 2016, the countries of the Cooperation Council wish to reiterate their disappointment that the following points were not included and/or were not given sufficient consideration:

1. Call on all parties, in particular the Houthi militias and forces loyal to the former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and their allies, to fully implement the Security Council's relevant resolutions, including resolution 2216 (2015);

2. Call on the Houthi militias to immediately lift the siege on Ta'iz and ensure the delivery of urgently needed humanitarian aid and supplies into the city, including food, water and medicine, as well as stop the shelling of residential neighbourhoods;

3. Condemn the continued military hostilities violating the border of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia amounting to hundreds of daily shellings on the regions of Jazan and Najran;

4. Call for the safe release of all political prisoners and all individuals under house arrest and arbitrarily detained.

In the meantime, we want to reiterate that the coalition to restore legitimacy in Yemen is taking all measures to ensure the delivery of essential humanitarian assistance, food, medicine and vital supplies, as well as commercial goods, including fuel for civilian purposes, to all parts of Yemen and is fully cooperating with the relevant United Nations agencies and other humanitarian relief agencies. In the meantime, the Houthis and their allies continue their seizure of urgent humanitarian assistance, food, medicine and fuel and preventing their delivery to the Yemeni people.

The continued resort to violence by the Houthi militias and their allies since the beginning of the crisis in Yemen, and their refusal to return to legitimacy and abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015), including paragraphs 1, 6, 8, 9 and 12 thereof, have resulted in the

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catastrophic and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen and further undermined the current political negotiations.

Against this backdrop, the coalition continues to reaffirm its support and appreciation for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulated as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Abdallah Y. **Al-Mouallimi**
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2016/29

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 January 2016
English
Original: Spanish

Identical notes verbales dated 8 January 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council and has the honour to transmit herewith the views of Cuba regarding the Arria formula meeting of the Security Council on the responsibility to protect and non-State actors, held on 14 December 2015 (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Cuba requests that the present note verbale and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the identical notes verbales dated 8 January 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Views of Cuba regarding the Arria formula meeting of the Security Council on the responsibility to protect and non-State actors, held on 14 December 2015

Issues related to the topic of "the responsibility to protect" are considered by the General Assembly. Cuba believes that the General Assembly is the only organ of the United Nations that allows for transparent, inclusive discussions, in which the positions and legitimate concerns of all Member States on a topic that has implications for all are given due consideration.

The issue of the responsibility to protect continues to raise serious doubts for many countries, particularly small, developing States, owing to the lack of consensus and of definitions regarding various aspects of a concept that is susceptible to being manipulated for political reasons.

Before applying the concept of the responsibility to protect, it is crucial that the General Assembly reach a consensus on its scope and implications, resolve differences of interpretation, guarantee its universal recognition and acceptance and lend legitimacy to the actions proposed for its implementation.

The international consensus on this issue is limited to paragraphs 138 and 139 of General Assembly resolution 60/1, entitled "2005 World Summit Outcome". It is incorrect to argue that the principle of the responsibility to protect was adopted in that document. That "responsibility" is not a principle; rather, it is a concept whose characteristics, rules of application and evaluation mechanisms are far from established or agreed. The aforementioned resolution recognizes only the responsibility of each State to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity; and that the international community should encourage and help States to exercise that responsibility.

The crimes listed in paragraphs 138 and 139 of General Assembly resolution 60/1 are acts that every State should prevent, repress and repudiate, whether they are committed in the context of internal armed conflicts in developing countries or, as has happened in the recent past, by the occupying forces, law enforcement agencies or military forces of developed countries. This balance, which can exist only in a less selective world and a more democratic United Nations, is far from today's reality.

International efforts to prevent those crimes must serve to strengthen the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular sovereign equality, territorial integrity and self-determination. However, the ambiguities inherent in the concept of the responsibility to protect and in the implications of implementing its "three pillars" run counter to such purposes and principles. Therefore, the pre-eminence of the principles of voluntary acceptance, prior request and consent by States regarding the responsibility to protect should be recognized.

Furthermore, some would seek to extend the scope of the responsibility to protect to situations that are not included in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. It

must be stressed that the concept refers solely to acts of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Ambiguous terms that were not included in the 2005 Outcome or in the minimal consensus on the responsibility to protect have also been put forward. Such is the case with the terms "atrocity crimes", "risk factors" and "imminent risks", which have yet to be clarified and agreed by the mechanisms and offices of the United Nations that are responsible for their definition and classification.

Another cause for concern is the lack of clarity with regard to who decides when there is a need to protect; who determines that a State is failing to protect its population; who determines the action to be taken, and on the basis of what criteria; and how to prevent the issue from being used for the purposes of intervention. It is also not clear how to ensure that the consent of the concerned State is obtained when taking action, so as to avoid the use of the issue to justify a supposed and non-existent "right to intervene".

It is unacceptable that organs such as the Security Council be granted functions that were not attributed to them. It is similarly unacceptable to reinterpret the concept of collective security endorsed in the Charter of the United Nations, which was conceived of only in the context of threats to international peace and security, in order to protect the State against external attack.

Many who enthusiastically defend the expansion of the concept of the responsibility to protect, even without consensus, do not promote with the same conviction the urgent need to examine and tackle the root causes of situations, such as underdevelopment and poverty, nor do they address the systemic problems that trigger conflict, often leading to extreme situations.

It is therefore worrying that the measures proposed for preventing and reducing the risk of crimes against humanity focus on political rights and basic freedoms, while disregarding the valuable contribution of initiatives aimed at promoting economic, social and cultural rights, as well as third-generation rights, such as the right to development.

It is a noble cause to strive to ensure that the international community does not remain impassive to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Nevertheless, in many cases, the promotion of the responsibility to protect is a disguised attempt to appropriate yet another tool for facilitating interference in domestic affairs, agendas involving regime change and subversion against third countries, most of them small and developing.

United Nations S/2016/30

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 11 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the summary statement by the Secretary-General of matters of which the Security Council is seized and of the stage reached in their consideration (S/2016/10), dated 4 January 2016, and wish to request that item 61, entitled "The situation between Iran and Iraq", be retained on the agenda of the Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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United Nations S/2016/31

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 January 2016
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 11 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I refer to our previous letters informing you of the attacks carried out by the so-called international coalition, led by the United States of America, against the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, its oil and gas facilities and its economic infrastructure. In that connection, I wish to transmit the following information.

On 3 January 2016, coalition aircraft once again attacked the service infrastructure. Their target was the Sahamiyat Drinking Water Station, which is positioned on the main water supply pipe in the Karamah plains in Raqqah governorate. The pump room, which contained seven pump units, was completely destroyed, as was a 2,000 m^2 ground reservoir and the wall around the station. The water station provides 650 m^3 of safe, clean drinking water, of which 250 m^3 per hour meet the needs of the Gharbi al-Jadidat area and 400 m^3 per hour go to the Karamah Plains Housing Complexes area. The Sahamiyat water station is the only source of water for the Mahran and Kahlan stations in the Karamah plains to the east of Raqqah city.

On 2 January 2016, the so-called coalition bombarded the Sabah al-Khayr pumping station, which is some 80 kilometres from Raqqah city and is owned by the Syrian Company for Oil Transport. Extensive damage was caused to old and new administrative buildings, the control building and the oil filtration pool. Preliminary assessments put the losses at some $2.5 million.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to point out that by bombarding the service, economic, industrial and productive infrastructure, the so-called international coalition has demonstrated its members' hostile intentions towards the Syrian Arab Republic. Along with the unilateral economic and financial coercive measures imposed on the Syrian people by the United States of America and other Western States, these attacks seek to deliberately destroy the resources of the Syrian people, prolong the crisis and delay early recovery, thereby affecting the lives of Syrian civilians, causing their living conditions to worsen and preventing them from earning their livelihood.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again asserts its right to seek compensation from the Governments of the United States of America and its coalition partners for the damage deliberately inflicted on Syrian service, industrial,

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productive and gas facilities. It requests that they bring an immediate end to such practices, which benefit only the terrorists and the enemies of the Syrian people.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2016/32

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the summary statement by the Secretary-General of matters of which the Security Council is seized and of the stage reached in their consideration (S/2016/10, dated 4 January 2016).

I should like to notify you that the Government of Georgia wishes to see the following item, listed in paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned document, retained in the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized:

"The situation in Georgia"

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vakhtang **Makharoblishvili**
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Georgia to the United Nations

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United Nations S/2016/33

Security Council

Distr.: General
13 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached letter from the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces (see annex).

I would be most grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Matthew **Rycroft**

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Annex to the letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Syrian opposition, I wish to convey our united commitment to ending the crisis in Syria, protecting innocent civilians and achieving the political solution that the Syrian people need. Over the course of the past four years, the Syrian opposition has worked to put an end to the senseless violence perpetrated by the Assad regime and to achieve justice for all Syrians.

Our goal during the Syrian crisis has been consistent: we demand an end to the indiscriminate killing in Syria by the Assad regime and his foreign enablers — Russia, Iran and Hizbullah — as well as extremist terrorist groups such as Daesh, whose collective crimes have cost the lives of over 300,000 Syrians, displaced half of the country and left more than 13.5 million Syrians in need of humanitarian aid.

We welcome the intensification of diplomatic activity to end the Syrian crisis, including efforts by the International Syria Support Group and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria to secure a nationwide ceasefire and a political process leading to a credible, democratic and inclusive government.

As you know, from 8 to 10 December 2015, members of Syria's opposition, representing all ethnic and religious groups in Syria, including men and women, as well as armed groups on the ground, met in Riyadh to form a unified opposition negotiating body. We reaffirmed our commitment to a fully representative and united Syria that reflects Syria's rich ethnic and religious diversity. We sought the membership and equal participation of all groups and individuals who:

- Share a commitment to a democratic, pluralistic Syria based on the rule of law, in which all Syrians are equal regardless of their gender, ethnic, religious or sectarian background;
- Agree that Syria's unity, independence and territorial integrity are fundamental and that functional Syrian institutions remain intact;
- Endorse the Geneva Communiqué, the objective of which is the formation by mutual consent of a transitional governing body with full executive powers, including over security, military and intelligence structures, as stipulated by the Security Council in its resolution 2118 (2013);
- Agree that extremist terrorist groups such as Daesh must be degraded and defeated.

The result was the single most united and representative Syrian opposition to date. Our members now include representatives of the Northern Front, the Southern Front, Jaish al-Islam, the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, the National Coordination Committee for Democratic Change, local councils and independent activists. Our members include representatives of all components of Syrian society, including Alawites, Christians, Druze, Kurds and other components of Syrian society. Our members are capable of reaching a political settlement to end the crisis and the killing in Syria, and they are the best equipped to implement such a settlement.

But we will not achieve peace in Syria or eradicate Daesh while innocent civilians are being bombed indiscriminately, starved into submission and detained, tortured and killed in Assad's prisons. If peace is to hold and a ceasefire to be agreed, Syrians need clear guarantees that civilian protection will be at the forefront of the political process. Syrians need urgent steps to:

(a) Protect Syrian civilians by stopping the indiscriminate air strikes that are the foremost killer of Syrian civilians, responsible for 69 per cent of civilian deaths in December 2015;

(b) Lift the sieges of Madaya and elsewhere that have trapped more than 500,000 Syrians, and ensure the delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance and medical care;

(c) Release political prisoners, more than 100,000 of whom are being detained and tortured in Assad regime prisons.

We are committed to the full implementation of the Geneva Communiqué of June 2012, the Vienna Communiqué of October 2015 and Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013), 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2209 (2015), 2254 (2015) and 2258 (2015), and we look forward to working constructively with your Office and the Special Envoy for Syria to save lives in Syria and achieve a political solution to the crisis.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Special Representative to the United Nations
Member of the General Assembly of the Riyadh Conference

United Nations S/2016/34

Security Council

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Letter dated 11 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations to report to the Security Council that the Kingdom of Denmark, as called for by the Council in its resolution 2249 (2015) and in response to the request by the Government of Iraq, is taking necessary and proportionate measures against the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) in Syria in exercise of the inherent right of collective self-defence as part of international efforts led by the United States of America.

The Security Council recognized in its resolution 2249 (2015) that ISIL constitutes a global and unprecedented threat to international peace and security. In this respect, the Council noted the letters dated 25 June 2014 and 20 September 2014 from the Government of Iraq stating that ISIL has established a safe haven outside Iraq's borders that is a direct threat to the security of the Iraqi people and territory. Furthermore, the Council condemned the horrifying terrorist attacks perpetrated by ISIL including in Sousse, Ankara, Beirut and Paris and over Sinai, and noted that ISIL has the capability and intention to carry out further attacks.

The Security Council called upon Member States to prevent and suppress terrorist acts committed by ISIL and to eradicate the safe haven ISIL has established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria. In accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Kingdom of Denmark is taking measures against ISIL in support of this call.

I request that you have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ib **Petersen**
Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations

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General Assembly
Security Council

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Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit for your consideration a non-paper by the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations containing a summary of the ideas and proposals from participants in the open debate held on 20 October 2015 by the Spanish presidency of the Security Council on implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) (see annex).

I should like to take this opportunity to express the deep gratitude of Spain to all the States non-members of the Security Council for their participation in and contributions to the discussion, as well as to the members of the Council who, through a presidential statement, expressed the intention of the Council to take more direct responsibility for the implementation of previously agreed decisions on working methods, and in the development of best practices.

The non-paper is based on the summary presented by the presidency at the conclusion of the open debate. By summarizing the prevailing views within the United Nations membership, concrete and operational proposals and ways to improve the working methods of the Security Council, Spain hopes to promote an ongoing commitment in this area and bridge the gap between decisions and implementation, both in the Council and in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 120, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Roman **Oyarzun**

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Annex to the letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

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I. Introduction

A. The working methods of the Security Council: an issue that concerns the entire membership

During the open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, held on 20 October 2015 under the presidency of Spain, the vast majority of speakers underlined the usefulness of such annual debates and the significant interest of the membership in the working methods of the Council and its decision-making process. Such interest was also shown by the number of participants at the meeting (54 speakers[1] on behalf of 162 Member States or observers: see footnotes 2, 3, 4 and 5 for details).

Among the various reasons behind the interest, the Deputy Secretary-General mentioned the high expectations of the Council and the United Nations as a whole around the world. In that regard, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain) pointed out that the annual open debate was about much more than just the working methods of the Council. It was about the decision-making culture and the effectiveness of the Council, and went to the heart of its performance. Another argument was put forward by the President of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft, who recalled that the full United Nations membership had conferred on the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agreed that the Council acted on the membership's behalf in carrying out its duties. Along this line, Lithuania added that, while only 15 Council members prescribe and set legally binding norms, all 193 Member States have to implement their decisions.

There was also a unanimous call for the action of the Council to be guided by the principles of transparency, inclusivity, accountability and efficiency. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), believed that a more effective, representative and transparent Council that could adequately respond to the current challenges was needed, and the United States of America underlined that with the current disparate and complex threats to international peace and security, the Council has an obligation to consider how to adapt and improve its functions. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela proposed to find effective formulas to promote greater transparency and inclusivity, if the expectations of the members of the Organization were to be met and their collective interests reflected. Sweden, as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, asked for more integrated, coherent and holistic action from the Council, and Italy recalled the growing demand for effective multilateralism. Thailand stated the need for the

[1] Angola, United States of America, Chad, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lithuania, China, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nigeria, Russian Federation, France, Sweden, Switzerland (as coordinator of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT Group)), Germany, India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Colombia, Poland, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Japan, Netherlands, Thailand, Italy, Egypt, Estonia (making additional remarks on the issue of the appointment of the next Secretary-General, on behalf of the ACT Group), Australia, Indonesia, Liechtenstein (making additional remarks on the issue of preventing or ending atrocity crimes, on behalf of the ACT Group), Holy See, Islamic Republic of Iran, Singapore, Uruguay, Sierra Leone, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Panama, Czech Republic, Peru, Pakistan, Cuba, Ukraine, Argentina, Algeria, South Africa, Nepal, Rwanda, Kuwait, Sudan, Tunisia and Republic of Korea.

Council and its subsidiary bodies to be efficient and transparent, ensure inclusive participation and be accountable in order to be effective.

For China, the holding of the open debate on the working methods of the Council fully reflected the positive attitude and willingness of the Council to draw on the opinions of the wider membership to further improve its work, while the Russian Federation recalled that the working methods themselves and decisions on their possible modification are the preserve of the Council.

B. Room for improvement

Despite some recent working method improvements mentioned by the United States, such as the clarification of the role of penholders, the revamp of the handover process from one subsidiary organ Chair to the next and the promotion of dialogue with United Nations bodies, and some progress in the frequency of public meetings, the flow of information to non-members of the Council and the interaction with non-traditional leaders, including representatives from civil society, as indicated by Chad, Nigeria, Switzerland (on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT Group)), Mexico and Egypt, there is still much room for improvement.

II. Transparency

A. Open debates

1. Open debates as a tool for the Security Council to assess the interactivity and effectiveness of its action and gather the views of the wider membership

As Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), pointed out, open debates and public briefings serve to make the Council more open to the wider membership, strengthening the buy-in and the legitimacy of its decisions. Portugal emphasized that they can prove very useful for listening to the general membership's views on various subjects and situations relevant to peace and security and, on the other hand, for enabling Member States to better understand the measures the Council adopts and helping to strengthen their commitment to their full implementation.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain) argued that more focus and interactivity are needed in order to ensure that open debates are a useful forum for exchanging views between the Council and the rest of the Organization. They need to be more than a platform for States to record national positions.

Furthermore, several speakers called for meaningful follow-up by the Council of the views expressed by the wider membership during such meetings, including in its "products". Concrete proposals are detailed in section III regarding the Council's efficiency in general, and in section VI pertaining specifically to the open debates on working methods.

2. Need to make open debates more efficient

In order to make open debates more efficient, Portugal pinpointed a target of concluding a productive debate in a single half day session by focusing on the messages deemed important.

The concept note for the debate (S/2015/793, annex) allotted 10 minutes to joint statements by groups, 3 minutes to national statements and only 2 minutes to national statements complementing joint statements. Most members welcomed this practice and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised the need to stick to schedules and keep statements to the agreed-on length. However, Nepal and India said that Council members should set an honourable precedent for non-members by making concise and meaningful speeches, rather than asking them to abbreviate their statements on important issues.

In line with the recommendation by the presidency to deliver joint statements, the Netherlands spoke also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg, Sweden on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement,[2] Kuwait on behalf of the Group of Arab States,[3] Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States,[4] and Switzerland as the coordinator of the ACT Group, a cross-regional group of 25 countries.[5] France and Germany delivered a joint statement and Angola spoke also on behalf of Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain, six Council members from six different regions of the world, an initiative which the Russian

[2] Non-Aligned Movement members (120 as at April 2015): Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[3] Group of Arab States: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

[4] Group of African States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[5] ACT Group members: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay. Switzerland is the coordinator of the Group.

Federation qualified as a genuine revolution in the working methods of the Council and asked to be supported.

Other proposals to improve the open debates were made by Lithuania, which suggested that more thought should be given to structuring open debates better in order to avoid having ministers from countries that are not Council members addressing the Council with an audience of junior experts there to listen, and by India, which asked for transparency in determining the list of speakers.

B. Other proposals to promote greater transparency

1. Political will to implement the working methods

Throughout the debate, delegations conveyed their appreciation for the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and its different chairmanships, and recalled the guidance provided to the Council by the numerous presidential notes. In that regard, Pakistan stated that improvements in the working methods of the Council were due in no small measure to the persistent efforts of its non-permanent members.

However, some delegations, such as the United Kingdom, Kazakhstan and Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), pointed out that, besides having good working methods, what is really needed is the political will to use them effectively. In that regard, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), recalled that presidential notes are couched in vague language and often not applied, and that some Council members even resist implementing them. That reflects the disconnect between the Council's working methods, the annual open debate on working methods and the Informal Working Group. To bridge that gap, the ACT Group suggested that the Council prepare a note that would consolidate and streamline all decisions taken regarding working methods.

2. Formalization of the provisional rules of procedure

The issue of the rules of procedure of the Security Council was also brought up in the context of achieving greater transparency, with Pakistan considering it unfortunate that, to date, they remain provisional. For their part, Cuba, Algeria, Singapore, Sierra Leone (on behalf of the Group of African States), Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Costa Rica requested the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council to be formalized in order to improve the transparency and accountability of the Council's work, regulate it and put an end to the excessively discretional nature of its actions.

However, Angola, speaking on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), recalled that meaningful changes are driven by practice, by taking the initiative and leading by example as much as by rules and procedure. In that regard, the six Council members stated that the Council will improve its performance by adapting its working methods in innovative ways to meet the needs of specific cases.

Rwanda pointed out that, while waiting for the adoption of definitive rules of procedure, various notes on the working methods of the Council will greatly

contribute to a more transparent, democratic and effective Council, provided that they are implemented in good faith.

3. More public meetings of the Security Council

The ACT Group and Thailand welcomed the efforts of the Council to hold open meetings, and Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Argentina called for open or public meetings to be convened more frequently, in order to enable countries, particularly those whose cases are under consideration, to contribute to the discussion. Kazakhstan said there should be genuine, meaningful interaction among Member States rather than prepared statements that are read out. Along the same line, Peru requested the public meetings to be substantive meetings and held at the appropriate time, and Costa Rica urged non-permanent members to use all means at their disposal to ensure that the Council increases both its transparency and its effective engagement with other relevant stakeholders.

Going even further, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Brazil, Cuba, Paraguay, Tunisia and Turkey asked for closed meetings and informal consultations to be kept to a minimum and be the exception rather than the rule.

4. Added value of Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues

Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)) and the United Kingdom stressed the need for having more time for horizon-scanning or for hearing from people on the ground, including through Arria-formula meetings. Many delegations, such as France and Germany, the ACT Group, Australia, Turkey, Algeria, the Republic of Korea and Tunisia, underlined the added value of Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues. The United States stated that Arria-formula meetings provide an important venue for the Council to hear views beyond those of Member States and constitute a way to inform itself informally about the difficult issues on its agenda.

The Russian Federation, despite advocating improved coordination of the activities of the Council with the broadest possible circle of Member States, argued that, in recent years, there has been a growing trend to use such meetings to stage propaganda spectacles in which certain delegations seek to promote their own unilateral positions, and called for the use of the Arria formula exclusively for its original end of providing greater clarity to the Council with respect to situations on its agenda.

5. Increased flow of information to non-members of the Council: presidency's briefings and wrap-up sessions, monthly assessments and annual and special reports

The seeking of information and understanding regarding the Council's activities remains a crucial and legitimate request.

In that regard, the Sudan recalled the note by the President of the Security Council on the reform of procedural matters (S/2010/507) and the fact that making the Council's daily agenda available and circulating the monthly journal to all States Members are priorities. It also conveyed appreciation for the efforts of those

Member States that, while taking over the presidency of the Council, organized a briefing to present the monthly agenda. In the same vein, the ACT Group, Algeria, France and Germany, Mexico, Thailand and Tunisia requested the members of the Council to continue the practice of providing wrap-up meetings and informal briefing sessions to non-members.

Regarding the Security Council monthly assessments, the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, called upon the Council to ensure that they are comprehensive and analytical and issued in a timely fashion. In this respect, the Non-Aligned Movement suggested that the General Assembly consider proposing parameters for the elaboration of such assessments.

Although credit was given to the annual report of the Security Council as an important source of information to non-members, the President of the General Assembly took the opportunity to recollect the calls from Member States for further improvement of its analytical quality. With that aim, Pakistan requested that the annual report be substantive, argued that meaningful interaction between the Council and the Assembly on it would be helpful and signalled that taking up some of the proposals set out in the letter written in 2014 by the President of the Assembly in that regard could be a good beginning. Paraguay, Rwanda and Thailand indicated that it should be more than a collection of resolutions and statistics and a summary of meetings and decisions adopted, and include assessments of its effectiveness and ways forward with concrete recommendations. Along the same line, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Algeria and Cuba asked for the annual report to be more explanatory, comprehensive and analytical, for it to assess the work of the Council, include also the cases in which the Council had failed to act, the views expressed by members during the consideration of the agenda items and the circumstances under which the Council adopted the various outcomes. Lithuania also suggested taking a fresh look at the possibilities of adjusting the structure of the annual report of the Council in line with the realities of the information age.

The Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Cuba further requested the Council to submit special reports for the consideration of the Assembly, pursuant to Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations.

Furthermore, regarding information from Member States to the Council, Guatemala voiced concern about the increase in the number of letters sent to the presidency of the Council with the aim of justifying military action taken in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, arguing that the members should question whether such communications genuinely comply with the obligation under the Charter to report immediately any action taken under that provision, as well as the legality of their open format.

6. Greater transparency of the subsidiary organs

The request for greater transparency extended also to the subsidiary organs of the Council. The aim is to enable the wider membership to have a better understanding of what those bodies do, raise awareness, provide a platform for sharing good practices and improve implementation, whether of sanctions regimes or counter-terrorism measures.

Lithuania and India indicated that the practice of the sanctions committees' Chairs briefing the Council in public should become standard and that the Counter-Terrorism Committee should engage with the membership. Moreover, sanctions committees should engage actively with the countries concerned and their neighbours and with relevant regional actors. The Chairs of subsidiary bodies should also visit the countries concerned and make better use of press statements and other forms of media engagement. Lithuania further suggested that press statements and other forms of media engagement by relevant subsidiary bodies or their Chairs — although the practice is not common — offer additional avenues for outreach and disseminating relevant information and should be further explored.

For their part, Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States) stated that subsidiary organs should function in a manner that provides adequate and timely information on their activities to the broad United Nations membership. Moreover, Cuba argued that non-members of the Council should have access to the subsidiary bodies, including the right to participate in their discussions.

Pakistan called for a transparent process leading to a balanced representation on the Council's expert panels, and Argentina underlined the need to respect due process in the Council's sanctions committees, in particular with regard to the listing and delisting of persons.

Both Argentina and Pakistan underlined the need for the Office of the Ombudsperson to be strengthened and said that there is no justification for limiting its role to only one sanctions committee.

Citing a different approach, Portugal suggested that the Council could also channel interaction through the subsidiary bodies, such as the sanctions committees and working groups, particularly those on peacekeeping and conflict prevention, and proposed that the Council do some thinking on how to make better use of the subsidiary bodies, including existing working groups, to capture the signs of emerging challenges to peace and security that are closely connected to the larger development agenda.

III. A more efficient Security Council

There was wide consensus on the need for a more action-oriented and efficient Security Council. In this connection, Chad stated that the absence of any progress in certain crises clearly demonstrates that the organ is not efficiently and responsibly fulfilling its mandate as it addresses the challenges of the twenty-first century. Indonesia, and Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), echoed the same concern, that the Council is clearly falling short of its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. Several situations were mentioned to illustrate the Council's failure to live up to those expectations, including the cases of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic (mentioned by Chad, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia) and the situations in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s, and currently in the Syrian Arab Republic (mentioned by Liechtenstein).

A. Improving the decision-making process

Different proposals were thus made to enhance the efficiency of the Council, with Angola, speaking on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), calling for the Council to throw off some of the constrictions that have cramped even the way it discusses matters, let alone how it makes decisions.

1. The need for more political focus and for invigorating the consultations

To that aim, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), requested working methods that produce effective political focus in the Council's work and, in that regard, called for more discipline and restraint in the range of initiatives considered or taken by the Council, many of which distract the Council from real problem-solving.

At the same time, the United Kingdom noted how formal the working methods could be, recalling that even in the allegedly informal meetings of the Council there were too many prepared speeches and too few genuine discussions. For its part, Lithuania asked for the "interactive" to be put back into the interactive debates, and for the Council to engage in genuine exchanges not limited to the reading of prepared statements.

Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, criticized the inconsistency of the Council's decisions by its demonstrated selectivity in addressing issues of grave concern to regional organizations.

2. Consensus should not be turned into 15 vetoes

A more efficient Council also means, as argued by Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), Australia and the United Kingdom, that deciding on procedural matters by consensus should not prevent the Council from taking the necessary action. Furthermore, it should not be elevated to the point where a 15-member veto was possible, not just in the Council itself, but also in its subsidiary bodies, including its sanctions committees.

3. Greater inclusivity of the Security Council itself

There were many voices demanding a more active role to be granted to non-permanent members in the work of the Council, be it through more inclusive consultations in the development of resolutions and presidential statements, the review of the penholdership system or more time for non-permanent members to prepare and be ready to deliver in the Council.

Consultations

Regarding consultations, China underlined that, before any action is taken, every effort should be made to reach consensus through patient negotiations among Council members so as to preserve the credibility and authority of the product at stake. For Egypt, the Council could benefit from more deliberations and consultations among its members.

Drafting of resolutions and presidential statements

The Czech Republic asked that the exchange with non-member States be intensified in drafting resolutions and presidential statements. Cuba stated that the Council's resolutions and presidential statements should reflect the views of Member States as expressed in the public debates. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), together with Cuba and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), agreed on the negative impact of the veto on the working methods of the Council, whereby elected members are routinely excluded for no reason other than habit. In the same vein, Paraguay deplored the treatment of certain items as reserved and withheld exclusively for the permanent members, considering it a discredit to the work of the multilateral system. Overall, the common denominator was the need for a more inclusive process of developing resolutions and presidential statements and for participation of both permanent and non-permanent members on an equal footing.

The penholdership system

The Russian Federation pointed out that the Council would benefit from a democratization of its work, facilitated by a more balanced distribution of obligations informally linked to the penholdership system. In that regard, it stated that certain Council members should not consider countries or even regions to be their exclusive purview or act as mentors on issues concerning those countries. Along this line, Chad considered the role of the penholder to be an anachronism and a form of guardianship that should be banished, together with Rwanda, which recalled the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2014/268), in which the right of any Council member to be a penholder was recognized. Both called for Council members representing the regions affected by conflicts on the Council's agenda to at least share the pen with the current penholders.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), together with Brazil, Pakistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), were of the view that the penholdership system has improved the Council's efficiency but has also diminished the opportunity for wider Council engagement, especially by the elected members, and has significantly increased the risk of Council products being crafted in a way that serves only the interests of the permanent members. Therefore, they encouraged changes to the penholdership system in order for it to regain a sense of ownership and collective responsibility over the Council's work, ensure necessary continuity by including permanent and elected members, and leverage members' relevant expertise, whether that be regional or through their chairmanship of subsidiary bodies or another source. For Italy, elected members could make a bigger contribution to the work of the Council by acting as a bridge to non-members of the Council and their concerns.

Other proposals were made by the ACT Group, which expressed its satisfaction that two countries on the Council had co-led visiting missions and suggested that the practice could serve as an example for the drafting of the products of the Council, and by Brazil, which recalled the positive experience of the Group of Friends of Haiti and indicated that it could be replicated. Pakistan linked the issue of the early election of non-permanent members to the penholdership system as a way to enable the Council to have more penholders from among the non-permanent members.

Transitional arrangements for newly elected Security Council members

The level of preparedness of incoming members of the Council was another area touched upon. The President of the General Assembly recalled the decision to conduct the elections of the non-permanent members of the Council six months before they assume their responsibilities, precisely with the aim of enabling the newcomers to better prepare for their two-year term on the Council. Along the same lines, Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), also welcomed the decision to hold Council elections six months before the start of the new members' term, further emphasized the need for new non-permanent members to be prepared and mentioned the annual Finnish workshop, aimed at providing new members with an in-depth orientation in Council practice, procedures and working methods. Kazakhstan argued that, to perform effectively from the start, during the interim period after their election but before they take their seats, the elected members should be allowed to attend meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, as well as informal consultations of the whole, in order to become acquainted with their new roles.

Chairs of subsidiary bodies

Pakistan said that the early election of non-permanent members will enable the Council to allocate the Chairs of subsidiary bodies in a timely manner. The importance of an early appointment of the Chairs of the Council's subsidiary bodies was also pointed out by the Deputy Secretary-General, who said that it is important that the new Chairs be able to hit the ground running, with solid knowledge of the work of their committees or working groups. He recalled that the Secretariat assists the outgoing Chairs in preparing documentation for the incoming Chairs.

Nevertheless, Chad called for a more open and inclusive process in the designation of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies and working groups, and Switzerland, on behalf of the ACT Group, underlined the need to ensure continuity in the work of the subsidiary bodies. Lithuania considered that the handover from Chair to Chair should be better managed and streamlined and that closer cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies should be promoted.

Sanctions committees

Regarding the sanctions committees, some speakers, such as Thailand, recalled that sanctions are important tools for maintaining and restoring peace and security, and others, such as Chad, referred to the important role of the Council's subsidiary bodies.

Other speakers focused mainly on efficiency. The Russian Federation considered that the Council is increasingly pushed into adopting sanctions mechanisms by invoking Chapter VII of the Charter, but that the effectiveness of such decisions leaves a lot to be desired, as they often lead to merely worsening a crisis. For its part, China encouraged pushing for the diplomatic settlement of disputes and handling of crises and, wherever possible, avoiding simply resorting to the threat or use of sanctions. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela suggested that the sanctions committees should operate alongside an ongoing political process and thus have a clear end date, further stressed that objectives should be clearly circumscribed, and recalled that sanctions should be used neither as a political tool

against countries and peoples nor as an end unto themselves, but rather as an instrument bound to the solution of a given conflict.

In order to improve the efficiency of such instruments, Lithuania underlined the need to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to provide adequate assistance to the sanctions committees in their work and argued that visits by the Chairs of subsidiary bodies to the countries concerned should be further encouraged and that consideration should also be given, where appropriate, to closer cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies. Thailand asked for the application of clear criteria in listing and delisting and for streamlined communications with Member States to address the increasing number of sanctions-related issues.

Both Kazakhstan and Thailand suggested proper assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the sanctions regimes in order to minimize unintended economic and social consequences, with Thailand further proposing a research-based approach, including the use of statistical analysis to evaluate and quantify the impact and effectiveness of sanctions and to provide valuable guidance for future policymaking.

B. A better use of working methods in conflict prevention

Conflict prevention was a recurrent theme for most speakers. There was broad consensus on the needed revitalization of Chapter VI of the Charter to renew the focus on the peaceful settlement of disputes by promoting good offices and mediation efforts or, as Peru pointed out, to move from a conflict management approach to a prevention approach.

In that respect, Chad, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Russian Federation deplored the excessive and quick resort to Chapter VII of the Charter and called for full utilization of the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII for the pacific settlement of disputes, instead of simply resorting to the threat or use of such methods as sanctions.

Many delegations also insisted on the need for the Council to make better use of the tools at its disposal, including fully exploiting early warning mechanisms, in order to reinforce its preventive role when dealing with threats to peace and security. Side by side with the suggestions put forward in the context of the Council's relationship with other partners, be they United Nations entities or not, as laid out in section IV, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the ACT Group and the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg) noted that horizon-scanning briefings, Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues could help to bring potential crises and deteriorating situations to the early attention of Council members. Lithuania and Australia recalled the usefulness of timely briefings or the use of the item "any other business" on threats, in line with Article 99 of the Charter, to strengthen the Council's preventive approach. For the United Kingdom, improved day-to-day interactions of the Council could lead to more time for horizon-scanning or for hearing from people on the ground, including through Arria-formula meetings. Likewise, doing more to connect the various parts of the United Nations and link the development agenda to the Council's work on peace and security would be a way to ensure that the Council's work is not just about ending conflicts, but also about avoiding future ones.

C. Reviewing the power of veto

Nearly all Member States referred to the veto power.

The Russian Federation stated that it is unclear why the veto is sometimes criticized by representatives of countries or regions that, in the absence of the veto, would find themselves under massive pressure from a particular group of States, and suggested that they consider their own national interests. Mexico pointed out that the veto is a responsibility, not a privilege, and Kazakhstan stressed that it should be exercised with the greatest caution. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), noted that the veto may not be, strictly speaking, a working method, but that it has a significant negative impact — a cascade effect — on the working methods of the Council. Ukraine claimed that, if the veto is used, the permanent member resorting to it should explain the reasons for such action, in particular with regard to its consistency with the Charter of the United Nations, and called for the proper implementation of Article 27 (3) of the Charter, which obliges a party to a dispute to abstain from voting.

There was a broad call for the revision of the veto power by such countries as the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Rwanda and South Africa, which recalled the Elders initiatives. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela further considered that use of the veto has thwarted the legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian State to be admitted as a full Member of the United Nations, despite the overwhelming support on the part of Organization's membership.

Australia asked for restraint on use of the veto and negative votes, while Indonesia and Cuba requested its abolishment and welcomed any steps to strictly regulate its use.

Numerous delegations (France and Germany, Lithuania, Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT Group), Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, Japan, the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Thailand, Italy, Singapore, Turkey, Panama, Peru, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)) and Ukraine) reiterated their support to the initiative by France and Mexico to regulate the use of the veto in the case of the most serious crimes as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Brazil and Tunisia further welcomed the initiative and Chad, while conveying its support, requested that its contours be clarified, given that the holder of the right has the freedom to use it even in those exceptional conditions if it considers that its vital interests are threatened. Chad further added that, nonetheless, the best way to limit the misuse of the veto is through Charter reform.

The code of conduct of the ACT Group for Security Council actions against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes also gathered broad support, from the United Kingdom, France and Germany, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Guatemala, Japan, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Thailand, Italy, Singapore, Turkey, Panama, Peru and Ukraine.

Liechtenstein, making additional remarks on behalf of the ACT Group on the issue of preventing or ending atrocity crimes, recalled that by committing to the code, States pledge that, while serving as members of the Council, they will support timely and decisive action by the Council to prevent or end atrocity crimes. They also pledge

more specifically not to vote against a credible draft resolution submitted to that end. In that respect, Singapore stressed that, if the permanent members of the Council feel they must use their right to veto, they should at least explain to the wider United Nations membership why they cannot support initiatives aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities. For its part, Brazil claimed that such a code should also address certain other aspects relating to prevention and accountability: that military action is a measure of last resort that can take place only in conformity with the Charter, and that decisions authorizing the use of force should rely on enhanced procedures for monitoring and assessing their implementation.

D. The working methods as part of the broader issue of Security Council reform

A number of speakers stressed that the issue of the working methods of the Council is an integral part of a much more ambitious endeavour, its reform process, and reiterated their well-known positions on the matter. They made clear that it is one major task that the international community should take up as it celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In that vein, India argued that the problems afflicting the Council go deeper than its working methods. While a focus on working methods is useful, it can in no way be a substitute for reforming the Council in a manner that would give its decisions legitimacy and acceptability. Saudi Arabia reminded all present that the process of Council reform had begun in 1993 but, although positive results had been achieved in such areas as transparency and broader participation, it had, unfortunately, not yet been possible to find a comprehensive solution that allowed the Council to address its fundamental tasks as might have been wished. In the same spirit, Algeria called upon Member States to keep in mind that a two-track reform of the Council must be tackled, one structural and the other dealing with the working methods. Similarly, Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, underscored that the efficiency of the Council was primarily dependent on the reform of its working methods, while at the same time recognizing the possibility of taking gradual steps with regard to improving the working methods of the Council.

Cuba considered that a genuine reform of the Council to transform it into a transparent, representative and democratic organ continues to be an outstanding issue and that, without that reform, the reform of the Organization will be incomplete. Furthermore, although changes to the Council's working methods are an essential aspect of its reform, the ones made to date have been merely formal and do not guarantee the genuine participation of Member States in the work and decision-making within the Council. Indonesia recalled that merely improving the working methods is not a solution to the larger problem, that efforts cannot be limited to procedures, and that it would continue to call for and contribute to efforts to realize a democratic, judicious, transparent, accountable and effective Council that reflects the plurality and concerns of all people. The Republic of Korea supported the idea that the working methods of the Council must be improved with a view to enhancing the Council's transparency, accountability, legitimacy and efficiency as an important matter within the broader context of Council reform. It stood ready to work with others to formulate a solution that could garner the support and understanding of the broader membership.

For his part, the President of the General Assembly recalled that the Assembly had decided to immediately continue the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during its seventieth session, and conveyed his intention to move the process forward as much as possible in the coming period.

While Poland looked forward to a swift resumption of the negotiations and Italy argued that the members must not shy away from debating the reform of the Council, with a view to making it more representative, transparent, democratic, effective and accountable, Mexico expressed hope that the spirit of cooperation seen in the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly will be transferred to the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, and confidence that reforming the structure of the Council is possible if all parties place political will and commitment before any other consideration in the negotiations.

Panama further recalled that the current process of Security Council reform is a matter of growing interest to 97.4 per cent of this community and represents no less than the need for States to ensure that their membership is representative of current geopolitical and regional realities.

Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), argued the need for a reformed Council that is truly representative and reflects the current geopolitical realities, and in which Africa, Asia and Latin America are adequately represented, thus supporting the intergovernmental process on Security Council reform and efforts to move the process forward. France and Germany also supported an equitable representation on and expansion of the Council.

The geographical representation was the main point made by the African speakers. The Sudan considered that the reform of the modus operandi and procedures of the Council constitutes an important part of achieving comprehensive reform in a manner that would establish equitable geographical representation of the world's continents, especially with regard to Africa. Chad and Sierra Leone, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, recalled that Africa is currently the only continent in the world with neither a permanent representative nor the veto power. Thus, the legitimacy and credibility of the Council and the effectiveness of its action will depend in the future on the participation of all its members, on an equal footing. Rwanda further reinforced this position, as a member of both the African Group and the L.69 Group, arguing that, more than ever, the Council should be expanded in both categories, with the same rights and privileges, including the right to veto, as long as it exists. In the meantime, it is critical that the Council continue to improve its working methods, with a focus on transparency, effectiveness, inclusiveness and fairness. South Africa echoed the position, reiterating its commitment to the Ezulwini Consensus, which seeks to provide Africa with two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats.

IV. More cooperation and coordination with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices as a response to the new challenges of today's world

The message from the three briefers and of the wider membership was clear. There is room for improvement in the way the Council cooperates with other United

Nations organs, bodies and offices, and urgency in doing so to enhance the Organization's overall preventive and reactive response to today's world.

The link between the way the Council works and its capacity and readiness to adequately respond to today's world and new challenges was also established by many, while more interaction of the Council with other entities was called for, including the troop- and police-contributing countries, the regional organizations and the Council's regional counterparts, the special representatives of the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioners, the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice.

Overall, as Portugal noted, the main point made was not so much on the need for the Council to recognize the importance of such interaction — that is not new. What generally emerged from the discussion was the call to put that into full practice, or, as Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), put it, the Council needs to become better at cooperating with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices.

Wider security issues, such as the security challenges facing small island developing States, "which are a matter of concern to the wider membership" (Italy), and migration, as "a joint integrated challenge confronting us" (Italy), the definition of follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the recommendations stemming from the three major reviews under way on the future of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the role of women in peace and security make it more crucial than ever.

To that end, Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), acknowledged that the challenges in coming to grips with the new threats are indeed very daunting, but also said that the Council can move to become more effective. Above all, that requires political will.

A. United Nations bodies

As Rwanda presented it, "from socioeconomic development, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to the review of peace operations, peacebuilding, and women and peace and security, Member States and different organizations have acknowledged the importance of adjusting the activities of the United Nations to the context of the world we live in today".

In the same vein, Italy stated that "we must acknowledge that today's security challenges are different from those of the past. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development introduces an integrated approach to sustainable development by linking together the five Ps of the Agenda: people, prosperity, partnership, planet and peace. Its implementation will require a fresh look at working methods and effective synergies among the various bodies of the United Nations. Similar challenges are posed by the need for an integrated approach to implement the recommendations stemming from the three major reviews under way on the future of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the role of women in peace and security". In Egypt's view, those same milestones "offer a unique opportunity to draw upon the broad-based membership of those bodies and to ensure a more holistic approach to sustaining peace and to reinforcing the linkages between the three pillars of the work of the United Nations", thus creating the need for closer cooperation and

interaction among those organs. For its part, Kazakhstan considered that "an analysis of current conflicts and geopolitical tensions demands that we not only conduct a review but institute an immediate, appropriate, strategic and transparent implementation of the necessary reforms".

From Turkey's perspective, regular and more substantive interaction between the Council and other United Nations bodies would not only augment the Council's transparency, openness and inclusiveness, but would also enhance the efficiency of the United Nations system in general. For Costa Rica, deepening communication between the Council and other bodies and actors allows the Council to effectively carry out its tasks.

1. Secretariat

The relationship between the Security Council and the Secretariat is shaped by the administrative functions the latter carries out, as well as by several other functions entrusted to the Secretary-General under Articles 98 and 99 of the Charter. The range of tasks it encompasses makes the Secretariat, as the Deputy Secretary-General noted, a vital partner of the Council.

Within the tasks under the Secretariat's responsibility, the Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the provision of detailed and actionable information on a wide range of issues on the Council's agenda; the translation of the mandates of the Council into peacekeeping operations, special political missions, sanctions monitoring groups and bodies such as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic; the provision of institutional memory and advice to the rotating Council presidencies and to its other members; and the implementation of decisions of the Council on its working methods.

Working methods developments

Looking at how the Council and the Secretary-General can better work together to maximize impact on the ground, the Deputy Secretary-General referred to some of the recent working methods developments: the briefings via secure videoconference from United Nations offices around the world; the Council website now offering a historical record of Council activities and information (for instance, on reporting requirements and mandate renewals); the expansion of the roster of the sanctions monitoring panels' experts to ensure geographical and other diversity; improving cooperation on sanctions through the Inter-agency Working Group on United Nations Sanctions; or the support to the Council in intensifying its cooperation with regional organizations.

Areas for further improvement

A particular accent, nevertheless, was put on how the Council can and should enhance its preventive role. To that end, the Deputy Secretary-General referred to the use of the "any other business" item to raise issues of concern and to the monthly briefing by the Department of Political Affairs to Council members on situations that could become threats to international peace and security.

The United Kingdom, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the ACT Group, the Netherlands (also on

behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Lithuania and Italy broadly echoed the same view. They also called for further use by the Council of those instruments, as they are helpful in bringing potential crises and deteriorating situations to the early attention of Council members.

Australia argued for better use by the Council of early warning mechanisms and timely briefings on threats, suggesting that, in this regard, the Secretariat should be empowered to bring to the Council's attention emerging threats, in line with the Human Rights Up Front initiative and Article 99 of the Charter. Italy also welcomed the strengthening of early warning mechanisms, such as the Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes, the Human Rights Up Front initiative and the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as valuable tools the potential of which will have to be fully exploited.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), and Portugal suggested that, in order to promote better interaction, Council members should respect the role of the presidency in organizing the Council's regular business for the month, including interactions with the Secretariat, as well as with other United Nations bodies, regional organizations and troop- and police-contributing countries.

Other suggestions aimed at improving the Council's working methods within its relationship with the Secretariat were presented, including enhancing the communications with the Secretariat before deploying peacekeeping missions or adjusting their mandates (China); enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping mandates and the triangular cooperation between the Council, the Secretariat and Member States at large, or making such cooperation more institutionalized, in particular with the troop- and police-contributing countries (Uruguay, Brazil, Rwanda, Republic of Korea); in order to maintain the effectiveness and legitimacy of the work of the Secretariat, the need to rotate the positions of the under-secretaries-general for peacekeeping, political and humanitarian affairs and certain other senior posts among all Member States and to make the process for their appointment more transparent (Russian Federation); strengthening the Secretariat's capacity to provide adequate assistance to the sanctions committees in their work (Lithuania); and the early appointment of Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Council (President of the General Assembly, Lithuania, Pakistan).

2. General Assembly

In 70 years of existence of the United Nations, as he recalled, Mogens Lykketoft was only the seventh President of the General Assembly to address the Security Council, the last time that happened having been eight years ago. Against that background, there was overall consensus on the fact that, as the President affirmed, the relationship between the Assembly and the Council could be both mutually reinforcing and complementary.

A number of areas in which the actions of both the Council and the Assembly are closely linked and even interdependent were identified by the President of the General Assembly and referred to throughout the debate. They included certain peace and security issues, the review of the Charter of the United Nations, the election of judges to international tribunals, certain recommendations from the Assembly to the Council, the Council's annual and special reports, the relations between the Council and certain subsidiary organs established by the Assembly and

the appointment of the Secretary-General. Colombia also considered it necessary to have a more comprehensive approach to peace consolidation, one that avoids fragmentation and a silo mentality in the roles of the Assembly and the Council and that takes into account the fact that not only are military and field operations part of the Council's responsibilities, but so are conflict prevention, recovery and rebuilding operations in post-conflict situations.

Areas for further improvement

Given that the General Assembly receives and considers the annual and special reports of the Security Council, which, according to the Charter, shall include an account of the measures that the Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security, a number of speakers (the President of the General Assembly, Lithuania, Thailand, Paraguay, the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba, Algeria, Pakistan, Rwanda) called for the improvement of the analytical quality of the annual report and for more special reports of the Council, with some presenting concrete proposals in that regard (as detailed in section II.B.5 on increased flow of information to non-members of the Council). As the President of the General Assembly put it, the exercise represents an important aspect of the transparency and accountability that the wider membership expects vis-à-vis the Security Council.

The timely election of the 10 non-permanent members of the Council and their adequate preparation was another area touched upon. Within the context of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, the President of the General Assembly recalled that during its seventieth session the Assembly is to hold two elections of non-permanent members, the first having already taken place and the second scheduled for June 2016. While the decision was welcomed by several delegations (see section III.A.3 on greater inclusivity of the Security Council itself), Nepal considered that the election of non-permanent members should be further brought forward to allow the elected members at least one full year to prepare for their responsibilities, with a view to helping to ensure that their membership substantially enriches the work of the Council.

The importance of the way the Council works and its relationship with the Assembly was addressed most often within the context of the upcoming selection of the next Secretary-General. Proposals in that regard are detailed in section V.

3. Peacebuilding Commission

There was broad consensus on the usefulness of the relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission and its country configurations. As the United States underlined, the Council and the Commission play differentiated but complementary roles. Overall, the references made to the Commission emphasized its advisory and early warning capacity as instruments of direct importance to the Council's work.

While acknowledging the efforts made so far by the Council to strengthen its links with the Peacebuilding Commission, many speakers did stress the need for further improvement in the way the two bodies work together to maximize impact in the implementation of the Council's mandates on the ground in countries on its agenda, and encouraged more participation of the Commission and the Chairs of its country configurations in the plenary meetings of the Council (Egypt, Australia, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Argentina, Rwanda, Tunisia,

Republic of Korea, Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, Chad, Nigeria, France, Germany, Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT Group), Mexico, Japan, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg). Lithuania also suggested their participation in consultations.

With regard to thematic issues, China suggested that the Council act strictly within its mandate and enhance its communication with the Peacebuilding Commission. The Chair of the Commission recalled that the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, on the challenge of sustaining peace (A/69/968-S/2015/490), would be under consideration by Member States. It provides recommendations on how to strengthen the relationship between the Commission and the Council, including that the Council regularly request and draw upon the advice of the Commission.

Moreover, and in the same vein as when referring to the relationship with the Secretariat, the call was particularly strong on the Council to make greater use of the Commission's early warning capacity. Several speakers, including Australia and Brazil, recalled that the recent peacebuilding review found that the Council should do better on conflict prevention and that overcoming fragmentation between the principal organs of the United Nations would strengthen its work in preventing conflict and sustaining peace, and called upon the Council to draw more regularly on the Commission's advice. Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), the ACT Group and Portugal intervened in the same way.

Along with suggestions on how the Council could take better advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission, ideas were also presented on which areas. For his part, the Chair of the Commission highlighted three areas where the two bodies might work better together: (a) through its convening role of a wide array of critical regional and international actors, the Commission could bring a peacebuilding perspective to the Council's decision-making; (b) the Commission could help to formulate the post-conflict strategies of the countries requesting the Commission's advice and bring priority peacebuilding issues to the attention of the Council upon its request; and (c) in support of the drawdown phase of peacekeeping operations, the Commission could help to sustain attention and commitment from the international community to national peacebuilding priorities. The United States highlighted the valuable information from diverse stakeholders on the ground in post-conflict States provided by the Commission.

4. Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council was often mentioned side by side with the Peacebuilding Commission, with many speakers calling for a renewed and strengthened relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, not only based on the fact that, as the Security Council recognized in January 2015, security and development are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing and key to attaining sustainable peace (S/PRST/2015/3), but mainly because many share the view that the 17 recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals provide an opportunity for the two bodies to build on best practices and take a renewed and active role in following up on implementation.

The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council recalled that the relations between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council were

enshrined in the Charter of the Organization, but considered that the provision foreseen in Article 65, which states that the Economic and Social Council may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist it upon its request, had been very limited. Against that background, he viewed the definition of follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to engage in a joint reflection on how the Charter bodies of the United Nations, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission, work together to translate the 2030 Agenda into tangible and coherent policy measures by the United Nations system and the international community at large. For Nigeria, the interaction between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council was almost negligible, and that, of the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, development and human rights — two of them, namely, development and human rights, fell under the purview of the Economic and Social Council. Nigeria thus called for closer interaction between both Councils, which was particularly crucial in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Side by side with lending a "new impetus" between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as the Czech Republic and Tunisia put it, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also "underlines the important link between security and development" (Czech Republic). The same point was made by the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea. While the United Kingdom considered Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals a good step forward in ensuring that the Council's work is not just about ending conflicts but also about avoiding future ones, the Republic of Korea attached great importance to how peacekeeping could dovetail with peacebuilding, while taking into account the visionary global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 16, on peace, justice and institutions. The Deputy Secretary-General also pointed in the same direction when referring to the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95-S/2015/446) and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General (A/70/357-S/2015/682), particularly underlining the proposals related to prevention and post-conflict measures, not least in the areas of peacebuilding and development. He further recalled that "peaceful societies" is a goal for the 2030 Agenda.

Regarding what more could be done, the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council identified several issues of common concern on which the Economic and Social Council could interact with the Security Council on a regular basis, be it through the establishment of an ad hoc working group or through more systematic interaction: the promotion of institution-building and improved governance, the need for social inclusion as a key component for sustained peace, the role of women and youth in that context, the consequences of economic and financial crises for global stability and the impact of environmental degradation on weakened societies. Portugal also suggested that the Security Council's consultation with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council could become part of a much broader aspect, conflict prevention, while seeing merit in organizing periodic meetings to discuss issues relevant to both their agendas, mentioning in this context the intention of the United Kingdom to focus, in November 2015, on the important interrelations between security and development. For Rwanda, as a partner of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council should actively participate in Security Council meetings and fulfil its mission accordingly.

For its part, Kazakhstan suggested that the Economic and Social Council be transformed into a global development council, to be developed collectively, working towards the centenary of the United Nations, under a new plan for a 2045 global strategic initiative.

5. Other United Nations organs and entities: the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, the Human Rights Council and the special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General

While also referring to other bodies and actors, Costa Rica put particular emphasis on the importance of deepening communication between the Security Council and the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, in order to allow the Council to effectively carry out its tasks. The International Criminal Court was further cited by Argentina among the organizations mentioned in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2013/515), and with which considered dialogue is essential in fulfilling the Council's functions. For its part, Lithuania considered that the Council should make better use of the tools available to pursue justice, including cooperation with the International Criminal Court, with respect to both new referrals and the follow-up on existing referrals. Along the same lines, France and Germany also were in favour of more extensive contacts between the Council and the International Criminal Court, either through visits by the Prosecutor or of the Council to The Hague, and of the improved sharing of information across peace missions in cases where the International Criminal Court was investigating, given that the activities of the Court are in fact intrinsically linked with the justice provisions of the mandates of those operations. As Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, the Permanent Representative of Italy stressed the importance of investing in the preventive power of justice by fighting impunity and promoting accountability, thus arguing that the Council should have a forum where international criminal justice issues could be regularly discussed, bearing in mind the various sensitivities at stake.

Arguing that respect for human rights and harmonious development are inextricably linked to peace and security, France and Germany further encouraged more frequent briefings to the Council by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights or his deputy and the Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, as well as other human rights mechanisms. Given that, from their point of view, "the protection issues are at the heart of the Council's activities and its mandated peacekeeping missions; this is the heart of a more preventive approach to crises. It is therefore natural that the Council should interact directly and frequently with those who are primarily responsible for these issues", Italy and Lithuania also explicitly referred to the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Costa Rica and the Republic of Korea found merit in regular public briefings by special envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General.

Costa Rica included civil society organizations in the list of actors with which the Council should deepen its communication.

Portugal suggested that the Council do some thinking on how to make better use of the subsidiary bodies, including existing working groups, to capture the signs of emerging challenges to peace and security that are closely connected to the larger

development agenda — such as climate change, pandemics, illegal trafficking and organized crime — and submit timely reports on them to the Council when they deem action to be necessary.

B. Encroachment

While granting merit in finding ways to improve the relationship between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies, several delegations nevertheless called on the Council to act strictly within its mandate and called for relationships based on respect for their respective competencies.

To that end, and regarding thematic issues addressed by the Council, Argentina, China, Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, Nepal, the Russian Federation, Tunisia and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) were of the view that the Council should deal strictly with issues relating to threats to international peace and security on which it could and must take urgent and tangible decisions.

More specifically, China suggested that the Council focus its energy and resources on addressing the most urgent issues that threaten international peace and security. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela called for a more balanced focus of the Council's work, one which avoids applying double standards in the examination of the issues under its consideration. For its part, the Russian Federation called upon the Council to be cautious when it comes to the consideration of thematic subjects, in particular those that rightly should fall within the remit of the General Assembly, arguing that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and specifically Goal 16, is not a matter for the Council. Nepal argued that the Council should not in any way allow the feeling to be perpetuated that it hijacks other bodies' agendas or trumpets them as its own. The Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Security Council should cease its ongoing attempts to shift issues on the agenda of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council over to the Security Council and its encroachment on the functions and powers of the Assembly. Cuba voiced its concern over the growing trend in the Council to consider matters and assume functions that do not fall within its area of competence, increasingly usurping the role assigned by the Charter to other organs of the United Nations, particularly to the General Assembly. Similarly, Argentina was not in favour of the Council, the function of which is the maintenance of international peace and security, absorbing the functions of other bodies, a trend which should be discouraged, given that the securitization of the United Nations agenda could lead to the Security Council assuming such matters to the detriment of bodies with universal representation, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Algeria also said that issues on the agenda of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council should not be shifted to the Security Council agenda.

Tunisia considered that a rich dialogue and collaboration between the Security Council and the General Assembly will enhance both entities and avoid overlap between their activities and the encroachment of the Council on the functions and prerogatives of the Assembly. Brazil's position regarding the relationship between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies was that closer cooperation is needed not only with the General Assembly — particularly concerning the issue of

Security Council encroachment on the Assembly's prerogatives — but also with the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Similarly, Egypt pointed out the need for closer cooperation and interaction among those organs, while observing a balanced respect for their respective functions and mandates.

Colombia and Lithuania, on the contrary, requested the Security Council to have a more comprehensive approach to peace consolidation, one that avoids fragmentation and a silo mentality with regard to the roles of the General Assembly and the Council. Algeria, Indonesia, and Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Council should take into account the recommendations of the Assembly on matters relating to international peace and security.

C. Other entities and regional organs, bodies and offices

The call for reinforced dialogue and/or cooperation went beyond the United Nations, encompassing also a broad number of other relevant actors, with the main goal of helping the Council to be more efficient.

1. Concerned countries and troop- and police-contributing countries

China, Thailand, Egypt, Indonesia, Cuba and Tunisia were among those arguing that the Council should give more weight to the opinions of the countries concerned on its agenda and enhance dialogue and interaction with non-members. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), and the Netherlands, speaking also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg, also pointed towards active consultation and dialogue with countries on the Council's agenda.

Similarly, Brazil not only called for countries with a special interest in a substantive matter under consideration by the Council to have their views fully taken into account, but also to be allowed to participate in its consultations, with that applying particularly to those countries on the Council's agenda, but also to troop- and police-contributing countries. Furthermore, Kuwait, speaking on behalf of the Group of Arab States, argued that the States concerned in the questions under discussion by the Council should be allowed a decision-making role in the Council. The Sudan reasoned that Member States must share any matter that concerns them and, when dealing with such matters, the Council should allow adequate time to the States concerned when undertaking any procedure, adding that the matter should also be accorded further attention when it or its manifestation coincides with a weekend, as may be the case with developing events.

At the same time, while China recalled that such mechanisms as the meetings with the troop- and police-contributing countries and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations should be fully utilized, Costa Rica, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Nepal, Rwanda, Tunisia and the Republic of Korea argued for active consultation and dialogue with such countries. Such interaction would promote a richer understanding of the challenges and potential solutions. Also, as the Netherlands stated, doing so would contribute to greater support for the mandates of such operations and, therefore, to a more effective fulfilment of those mandates.

For their part, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, India, Mexico, Egypt, Indonesia, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Pakistan and Ukraine supported timely consultations with the troop- and police-contributing countries on the definition, amendment or renewal of mandates. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), specifically argued that troop- and police-contributing countries possess "knowledge and challenges that they acquire in the field" which represent "an asset that the Council must consider when discussing its mandates". From Egypt's perspective, "consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries should address the political and long-term strategy of the relevant peacekeeping missions". For Uruguay, "listening to the voices from the ground will lead to more credible and realistic mandates", or, as Pakistan put it, "their involvement in the processes of mission formation will address many issues related to command, control, communication, coordination and inter-mission movements".

2. Regional organs, bodies, offices and counterparts

A call for greater involvement of and enhanced cooperation with such regional organizations as the African Union and its subregional mechanisms, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, was also made by a number of delegations, including China, Chad, Nigeria, Italy, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Algeria, South Africa, the Sudan, Tunisia, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), Egypt, Costa Rica and Rwanda.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), also asked for more seriousness about the supporting partnerships and the complementary roles of the United Nations, regional organizations and counterparts, especially the African Union, in preventing and managing conflicts. Brazil added the need to consider new ways to improve the participation of regional and subregional organizations in the Council's decision-making process. Egypt emphasized the need for practical and more meaningful partnerships. As Rwanda summarized, "it is of great added value for the Council to maintain regular consultations with regional and subregional organizations ... for a better outcome in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and prevention. This kind of partnership will help the Security Council move from a culture of the daily management of crises to that of the effective prevention of conflicts".

With regard to concrete proposals aimed at enhancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, South Africa implored the Security Council to give effect to its resolution 2033 (2012), in which it decided, in consultation with the African Union Peace and Security Council, to elaborate further ways of strengthening relations between the two Councils, including through achieving more effective annual consultative meetings, the holding of timely consultations and collaborative field missions of the two Councils, as appropriate, to formulate cohesive positions and strategies on a case-by-case basis in dealing with conflict situations in Africa. Referring to the situation in South Sudan, in which some members of the Security Council were ready to impose sanctions despite the African Union Peace and Security Council being seized with the matter and the unfolding processes at the African Union level, South Africa also called for more consistency in the way the Security Council coordinates its position with that of the African Union.

V. Selection of the next Secretary-General

Within the topic of the Security Council's cooperation with the General Assembly, the vast majority of speakers referred to the process for the appointment of the next Secretary-General as one of the key decisions to be made over the coming year. Quoting Costa Rica, "the election of the next Secretary-General will be a golden opportunity to increase the equality, transparency, predictability and inclusivity of this process and to further strengthen the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as it is a decision taken not by the 15 members of the Council alone but by the entire membership".

Setting the tone, the President of the General Assembly recalled that "through General Assembly resolution 69/321 ... the United Nations membership has unanimously provided clear guidance for the way forward. Specifically, they have requested that the General Assembly President and the President of the Security Council begin the process ... [by] jointly circulating a letter to the whole membership inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner and describing the entire process. It is also envisaged that the Presidents of the General Assembly and Security Council would jointly circulate to all Member States, on an ongoing basis, the names of individuals who have been submitted for consideration as candidates, together with accompanying documents, including curricula vitae".

A. More transparency and inclusiveness of the wider membership

In order to move from an outdated way of selecting the Secretary-General, as the Czech Republic put it, Member States overall called for more transparency and inclusiveness, with General Assembly resolution 69/321 being broadly identified as the framework outlining the guidelines for such a process. As Rwanda underscored, it is in the interests of the credibility of the Organization. Paraguay also called for such a process to be dynamic, as well as for the Council and the Assembly to act in a coordinated and complementary manner, while Poland considered that greater interaction with the candidates should also guide the process. Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue of the appointment of the next Secretary-General on behalf of the ACT Group, specified the need to ensure that not only all Member States, but also the wider international community, have the possibility of learning about the vision of the candidates presented and interacting with them.

To this end, throughout the debate, the following concrete proposals were put forward:

(a) A clear timetable for the selection process (Mexico);

(b) The publication of a regularly updated list or the sharing of information on candidates (ACT Group, Colombia), as well as the membership to be kept abreast of developments (South Africa);

(c) The scheduling of meetings and hearings with declared candidates (ACT Group, Colombia, Czech Republic, Rwanda), with South Africa suggesting such engagement through a series of interactive dialogues in the General Assembly, and several others referring to, in terms of interactivity with the Security Council, Arria-formula meetings (Mexico, Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), South Africa);

(d) The Secretary-General should issue reports, as is usual, summarizing the proceedings (India).

B. Profile of the candidates

Side by side with the process, another important element of resolution 69/321 brought up during the meeting and highlighted from the outset by the President of the General Assembly related to the profile of the candidates. The United States looked forward to a process that leads to the appointment of the best possible candidate for the position of Secretary-General. Egypt added that "landmark resolution 69/321 paves the way for a transparent and merit-based selection process". The Holy See recalled that the membership deems that the criteria for qualified candidates must include proven leadership and managerial abilities, extensive experience in international relations and strong diplomatic communication and multilingual skills. For its part, Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue on behalf of the ACT Group, considered that the main concern should be ensuring that the best candidates come forward and are considered based on concrete selection criteria. South Africa suggested that the list of criteria should be developed in consultation with Member States and by drawing on the Charter of the United Nations and additional sources, such as previous Joint Inspection Unit reports on the criteria for senior management positions in the United Nations.

C. Gender equality/women candidates

The call for women candidates also strongly echoed throughout the debate. Lithuania, the Holy See and Tunisia underlined the need to consider equal and fair distribution based on gender. Germany and France firmly supported the call contained in General Assembly resolution 69/321, in which the Assembly invited Member States to consider presenting women as candidates for the position of Secretary-General, given that, to date, all the Secretaries-General have been men, while the United Kingdom affirmed that appointing a woman to the role would be more powerful still. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), suggested this element to be present from the outset, with the letter to be sent jointly by the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council calling for qualified candidates, especially women.

The support of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Poland extended also to mainstreaming women's equality in the Organization, as, from their point of view, choosing a female Secretary-General would constitute a significant step towards achieving gender balance throughout the entire United Nations system.

While Argentina indicated that it would be desirable for at least one candidate to be a woman (of those put forward by the Council to the General Assembly), Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue on behalf of the ACT Group, argued that in making the final decision, preference should be given to equally qualified female candidates. Colombia recalled the initiative, joined by 48 Member States, of searching for suitable women candidates for the position and argued that the historic role that a woman could play at this new stage would be the beginning of great progress in reform.

D. Regional rotation

Views as to whether there is any requirement for geographical rotation were also expressed. The Holy See and Tunisia argued in favour of taking into consideration an equal and fair distribution of candidates based not only on gender, but also on geographical balance. Poland recalled that in the 70-year history of the Organization, the Secretary-General has never been appointed from among candidates from the Eastern European Group, therefore expressing support for the Council taking regional rotation duly into account in its recommendation of a candidate to the General Assembly.

E. Beginning of the process/timing of the decision

Although the Russian Federation indicated seeing no practical value in launching the selection process immediately, a number of delegations shared the opposite view and the expectation that the Council would do its part in ensuring that General Assembly resolution 69/321, adopted on 11 September 2015, is fully and promptly acted upon.

Among those who called for the launching of the process as early as possible were Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Egypt, Estonia, Australia, Turkey, Costa Rica and South Africa, with Estonia voicing the hope of the ACT Group to receive the joint letter in the coming weeks so as to set in motion the whole process before the end of 2015. The basis for an early commencement derives from the understanding that, as the President of the General Assembly underlined, providing adequate time for preparation prior to assuming office in the Organization is fundamental to ensuring the effective discharge of responsibilities during the transition period.

F. Within the Security Council: procedural suggestions and multiple candidates

Referring to the process within the Security Council, India argued that an important step would be to do away with secret straw polls using different coloured slips[6] that allow the five permanent members to exercise the veto without even taking ownership of it. India added that discussions should be held in official meetings of the Council, preferably open ones but not necessarily so.

At the same time, India, along with Chad, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Costa Rica, Argentina and South Africa, supported the call for the General Assembly to be able to choose among several candidates. As India put it, "while the pronouncements of the General Assembly do

[6] In 1981, the Council began the practice of conducting straw polls, under which members would indicate either encouragement or discouragement. In 1991, the practice of colour-coded ballots, with red for permanent members and white for elected members, emerged in later stages of the straw polls. By using this process, votes could be cast informally without holding an official meeting in the Council chamber or casting formal votes.

not specifically provide for it, there is, in our view, no legal impediment for the Council to do so". Among the reasons presented were enabling the entire membership to make the appointment and ensuring that the process includes an election, and not simply an appointment, so that the General Assembly can have a greater say in the selection of the Organization's highest position.

G. Term of office and re-election

In 1946, the General Assembly decided in its resolution 11(I) that the first Secretary-General should have a term of five years, renewable for a further five years. However, the resolution specifically provided that "the General Assembly and the Security Council are free to modify the term of office of future Secretaries-General in the light of experience".

Although a term of five years has become customary, it is discretionary. Thus, several Member States voiced their support for the principle of electing the future Secretary-General for only one term, even if, as Guatemala pointed out when referring to the provisions of resolution 69/321, no agreement was reached on the Secretary-General's term of office and re-election. Such were the cases of Chad and South Africa, with the latter specifically referring to a term of seven years, or Nepal, which argued that the term of the Secretary-General should be fixed and closed to extension to ensure that it is strong and effective, and to prevent the first term from being spent ensuring a second. For its part, Estonia, making additional remarks on behalf of the ACT Group, addressed the issue as yet to be settled, looking forward to a thorough discussion at the session of the duration of the term in office of the Secretary-General, including the option of a single, non-renewable term.

VI. Follow-up

A. Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions

As stated in the concept note for the debate, the Security Council has continued to adapt itself by constructively addressing several concerns relating to its working methods, thus making the working methods a dynamic and ongoing process.

Throughout the discussion, delegations highlighted a number of innovations introduced, often mentioning the range of previously agreed measures contained in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) and subsequent notes agreed by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.[7] However, as Switzerland, on behalf of the ACT Group, clearly pointed out, since the publication of the note by the President (S/2010/507), the Council has agreed on 10 subsequent notes, but their implementation has often proved to be unsatisfactory or inconsistent. Thus, along with a general call for their further implementation, several proposals were put forward, as well as areas in which to make further progress and means thereto, including through the Informal Working Group.

[7] S/2012/402, S/2012/922, S/2012/937, S/2013/515, S/2013/630, S/2014/268, S/2014/393, S/2014/565, S/2014/739 and S/2014/922.

Regarding the Informal Working Group, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), called for the Informal Working Group to base its future work on the common points of action from the outcomes of the open debate. Argentina proposed that, following the holding of open debates, the Informal Working Group take into account the areas of agreement among the broader membership as to how the Council works, underscoring two concrete issues: due process in the Council's sanctions committees, in particular with regard to the listing and delisting of persons, and the referrals made by the Council to the International Criminal Court.[8]

B. Security Council

At the same time, Paraguay called upon the members of the Security Council to take up the outcomes of the debate. For its part, and in order to facilitate follow-up, the ACT Group suggested that the Council prepare a note that would consolidate and streamline all decisions taken regarding working methods.

Without specifying the forum, Japan stated that there should be a move from theory to practice, adding that to improve the working methods of the Council, it is essential to further codify invisible customs and practices of the Council. For its part, Costa Rica noted that despite the calls of the membership, a plan of action for implementing the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) and its subsequent updates has yet to be adopted.

VII. Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2015/19)

On 30 October 2015, 10 days after the open debate on its working methods, the Council adopted a statement by the President on the subject (S/PRST/2015/19).

The statement was the first Council decision in nearly a decade that was focused entirely on working methods, one of very few such documents in the overall practice of the Council and, although the initial draft text was circulated by Angola, New Zealand and Spain, the final text was the result of constructive engagement from all the Council members.

The statement builds on several of the issues addressed during the debate and registers advances in some areas regarding the Council's working methods, while, in other respects, it restates earlier commitments made by the Council. Nevertheless, perhaps its most important contribution was summarized by the President (Spain) at the adoption meeting: "I think it is a good sign that we are able to adopt texts that bind us in future to continue to work with greater efficiency and dedication".

[8] On the first issue, Argentina favoured including ombudspersons in all sanctions committees, beginning, as a first step, with the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities. On the referrals made by the Council to the International Criminal Court, Argentina noted that, despite the Council regularly receiving from the Prosecutor of the Court the reports required by its own resolutions, it takes no action in response, even when the Court informs the Council that cooperation required under the Council's resolutions has not been provided.

United Nations A/70/680–S/2016/36

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2016
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda item 37
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of violations and acts of aggression committed by Israel in 2015 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 37, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

16-00493 (E) 190116 200116

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Annex to the identical letters dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Violations and acts of aggression committed by Israel in 2015

	Air violations					*Land violations*				
Month	*Military jet*	*Reconnaissance aircraft*	*Helicopter*	*Total*	*Sea violations*	*Military acts of aggression*	*Field violations*	*Breaches*	*Total*	*Grand total*
January	11	53	–	64	2	1	6	–	7	73
February	6	19	1	26	6	–	10	–	10	42
March	13	32	1	46	9	–	29	–	29	84
April	17	58	2	77	22	–	22	–	22	121
May	8	50	1	59	44	–	33	–	33	136
June	6	56	–	62	26	–	27	–	27	115
July	8	80	1	89	39	–	11	–	11	139
August	6	57	–	63	25	–	16	–	16	104
September	6	39	–	45	20	–	11	–	11	76
October	31	50	1	82	11	–	15	–	15	108
November	9	29	–	38	18	–	6	–	6	62
December	24	48	–	72	20	1	15	–	16	108
Subtotal	**145**	**571**	**7**	**723**	**242**	**2**	**201**	**–**	**203**	**1 168**

United Nations S/2016/37

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), which was established by the Security Council in its resolution 1990 (2011) and most recently extended in resolution 2251 (2015).

Following the usual consultations, I should like to inform you of my intention to appoint Major General Hassen Ebrahim Mussa (Ethiopia) as Force Commander of UNISFA. He succeeds Lieutenant General Birhanu Jula Gelalcha (Ethiopia), who will complete his assignment on 20 January 2016. I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Lieutenant General Gelalcha for his dedication and effective leadership of UNISFA as head of the military component.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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United Nations S/2016/38

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 14 January 2016 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 12 January 2016 (S/2016/37) concerning your intention to appoint Major General Hassen Ebrahim Mussa (Ethiopia) as Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention expressed in your letter.

(*Signed*) Elbio **Rosselli**
President of the Security Council

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